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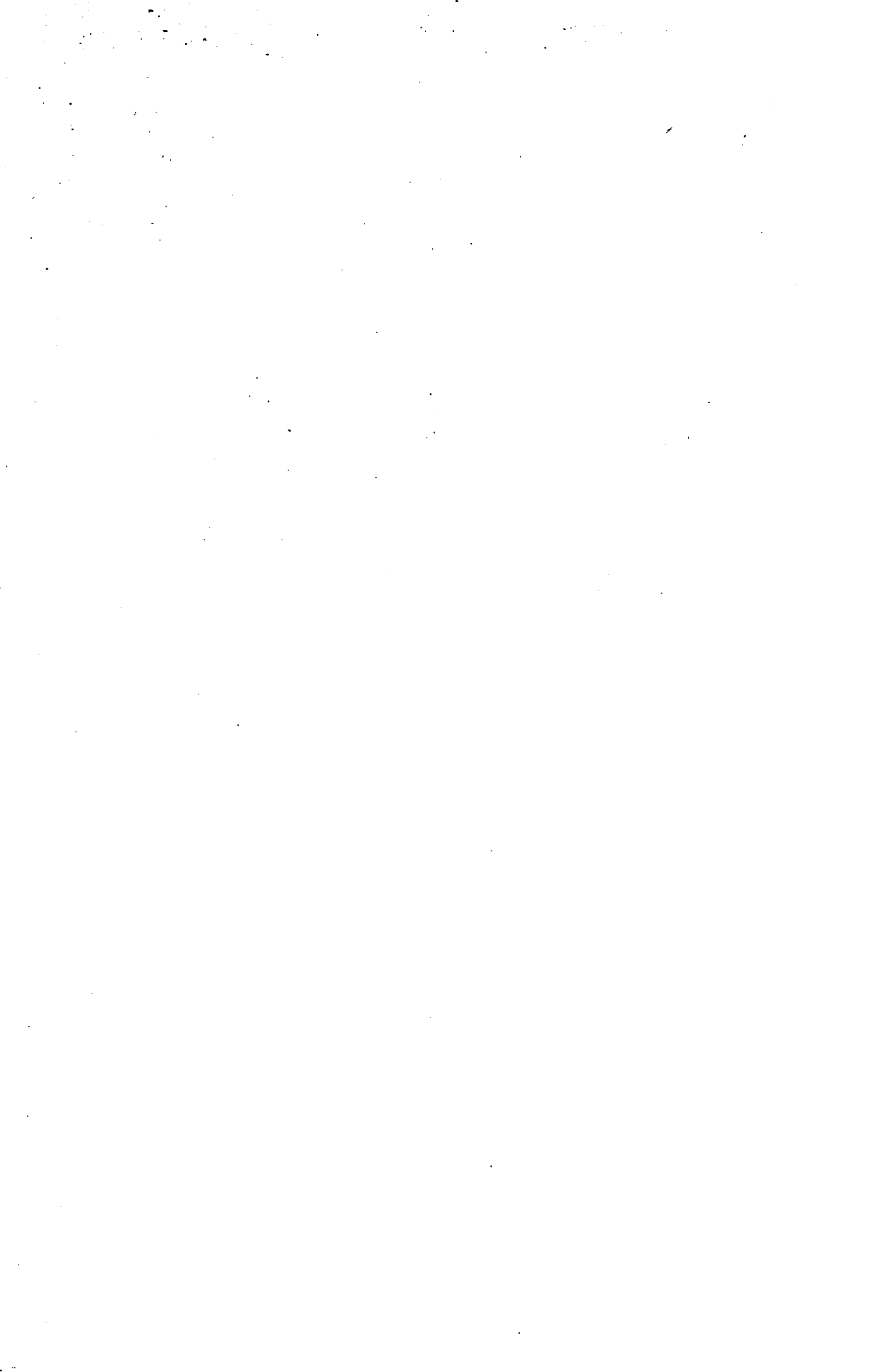
JESUS THE PATRIOT

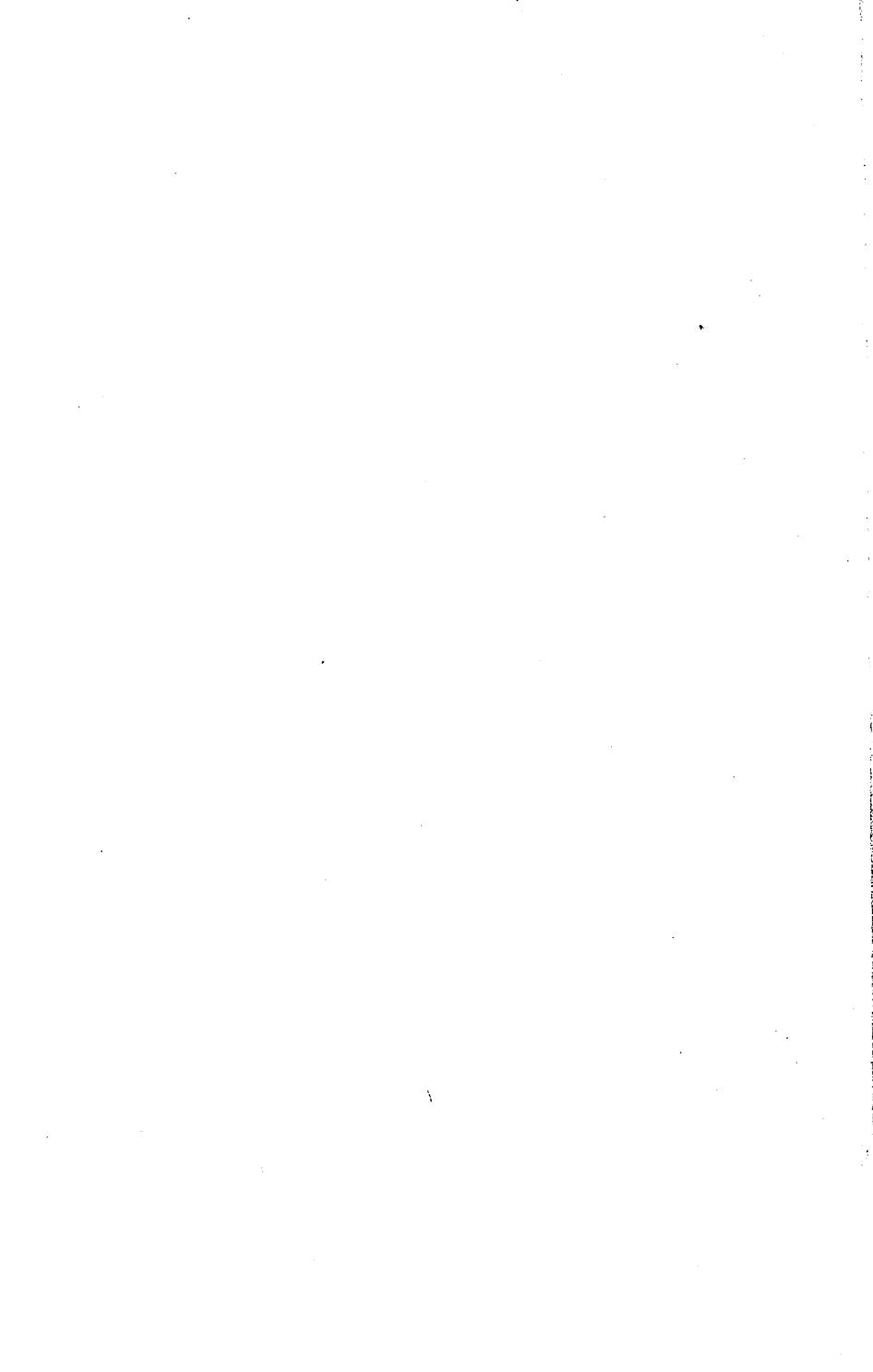
FRANK B. COWGILL

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## JESUS THE PATRIOT



# JESUS THE PATRIOT

BY

FRANK B. COWGILL

II



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DEDICATION

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK TO THOSE WHO BELIEVE  
THAT THE SPIRIT AND PRINCIPLES OF THE  
PATRIOT-PROPHET OF GALILEE MUST RULE  
THE LIFE OF NATIONS AS THE ONLY CONDITION  
OF CIVIC VIRTUE, SOCIAL FELICITY AND INTER-  
NATIONAL PEACE.



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## A PERSONAL WORD TO MY READERS

A word of personal experience will help my reader to understand the mood in which I write and to interpret the story I try to tell. In my childhood I was given a New Testament. In youth I was given pencil and paper for writing down out of the gospels what interested me most. I do not forget the radiance of those pages or the rapture of those hours, and my study thus begun has never been discontinued.

My first wonder was about the miracles, turning water into wine, multiplying loaves and fishes, stilling the storm and walking on the sea, healing the sick and raising the dead, coming into the world without a human father and escaping alive from the tomb. Jesus was a divine being thinly veiled by a garment of flesh and simulating rather than realizing human experience.

After many years I write again of him who charmed my childhood, and still I write in loving wonder. Then I saw the lustre of his divinity; now I see as clearly the splendor of his manhood. Then I saw God wrapped up in man; now I see man aflame with God. Then I saw Jesus intent on peopling Paradise with ransomed souls; now I see him building a social Eden here. Then I saw him inviting men to heaven; now I see his patriotic distress over a distracted people and his agonizing labor to save a sinking state.

As first I saw manhood in his divinity, I now see divinity in his manhood; and I think the two are somehow one in the mysterious depths of his being. As once I saw him proclaiming the mercy of God and inviting men to heaven, I now see him with torn hands defending the poor and weak while calling men to battle against the wrongs of earth; and these two are also one in the processes of individual destiny and world redemption.

## A PERSONAL WORD TO MY READERS

I expect this narrative to interest many whose thoughts are turning from the Christ of the churchmen to the Jesus of the gospels. His effort to save his country and all men from pride and greed and war is the most thrilling chapter in the long story of our world. The theological implications of my theme I definitely and purposely leave to others. The sacrificial theology built about Jesus by the church had no place in the thinking of his fellow citizens during his public ministry. It is an after-thought of men amazed at his greatness and seeking to fathom the meaning of his life and death.

### *Patriotism and Messianic Hope*

I have written this book for the purpose of describing the effort of Jesus to save his country from that disastrous war which he saw coming. I feel increasingly that if we are to see him as his fellow citizens, both friends and foes, saw him during his public life, we must recognize more definitely his patriotism as an Israelite. Patriotism was the very essence of Israel's messianic hope. She expected the Messiah to be a national Savior whose righteous rule would glorify Israel and bless the gentiles also. Even the apocalypticism of the early Christian Church, while it spiritualized the national ideal so as to include the godly gentile, saw the fulfillment of the nation's hope and the climax of her achievement in the "New Jerusalem," with the names of the tribes of Israel written on its gates of pearl.

Jesus was an ardent Jewish patriot, but history shows him to have been much more than that. High intelligence, moral passion and religious insight always devote the patriot to larger issues than those which concern merely his native land and race. If Jesus was a perfect man, he met the larger, universal obligations of manhood. If he was more than man, the significance of his personality and mission is ex-

## A PERSONAL WORD TO MY READERS

tended still more widely. But this story emphasizes his effort as a patriot-prophet to save his people from impending calamity by a great moral and religious revival, and to usher in the personal freedom and social felicity of fraternal and godly living. This is the outstanding fact of his public ministry.

The message of Jesus was spoken to people who believed themselves a divinely favored race; but they were then burdened by foreign rule and domestic wrong, and felt that their civilization was breaking down through the influx of foreigners whose social contacts and business competition irritated them intolerably. Their religion was running into formalism one way and into fanaticism another, while morality grew lax under the strain and the war party increased in power every day.

### *A Patriot-Prophet's Fight*

The prophets of the race have always kept close to their fellows, have been highly sensitive to current tendencies and have responded heroically to the touch of circumstances. Jesus, the patriot-prophet of Galilee, came into the thick of a fight and struck mighty blows. His primary, definite objective was not Calvary, but the salvation of his people. He did not want to die in a storm of lies, branded as a criminal. His agonizing prayer in Gethsemane and his heart-broken wail upon the cross tell us that. He wanted to live and fight; and he did fight a patriot's battle through to its bitter end. He would not have seemed to us a perfect man if he had not made a perfect fight. It was beautiful, courageous, measureless manhood behind the flashing eye and speaking tongue that put divine meaning into the red stains on the cross.

He fought a patriot's fight to save his country, and fought it with that faith and love and truth which still bless and will yet save the nations of the earth. To his last breath and to the last ounce of his strength he

## A PERSONAL WORD TO MY READERS

fought against the greed, race prejudice and war politics that through all his life time were pushing his nation toward the brink of that precipice over which it plunged to utter ruin forty years later, and, by a strange irony of fate, or, we should rather say, dispensation of providence, he was finally put to death on the charge of abetting that movement which he had done everything in his power to defeat.

If it be asked why the gospels do not bring out more fully the social and political facts of Jesus' time and the relation of his teaching to these facts, it may be answered that the amazing developments of the Christian movement after his crucifixion reduced to relative insignificance those words and deeds of the great Teacher which had merely local color and political meaning. His followers lost their interest in these and ceased to talk about them, and they fell out of the tradition which was finally embodied in the gospel narratives. Clear tokens of them remain, however, in the New Testament, and will be recognized by those who have "eyes to see."

FRANK B. COWGILL.



# Jesus the Patriot

## CHAPTER ONE

### JESUS FACING HIS COUNTRY'S PERIL

If an archeologist should now find one authentic incident in the life of Jesus not already recorded in the gospels, its publication would be the sensation of the reading world. It would seem that to the story of his birth and babyhood the evangelists might have added many incidents of his youth and early manhood.

One such story which may be regarded as significant of his character is given by Luke. When twelve years old he attended the passover festival at Jerusalem. His parents lost him in the city crowds, and found him, after a long search, in one of the temple courts, listening to a group of men who were discussing some important question. Some of the men, who became interested in him, were amazed at this bright lad whose brogue suggested Galilean nativity, but whose understanding was quite beyond his years. His mother, whose patience had been tried by their long and anxious search for him, said, "My boy, why have you treated us so? Your father and I have been hunting for you, with much anxiety." He answered, "Why did you look for me anywhere else? Didn't you know that I must be in my Father's house?"

The incident suggests his religious precocity. How had he come to think and speak of God as his "Father"? Was this habitual? Were his parents accustomed to speak so? Had Mary confided to him any wonderful secret? Probably not, for they were amazed. He was coming to new consciousness of himself and his heavenly Father. "My Father's house," he said; or, if we

translate it otherwise, "My Father's business." Was he beginning to feel the weight of the strangest burden any man ever carried? Was there something prophetic in this mood?

We do not know, but it is quite possible. He returned to Nazareth, and while his mother pondered these things in her heart and wondered what her boy was yet to be and do, he came to maturity of mind and body while doing the work of a carpenter, thus preparing himself through eighteen unrecorded years for that task which was to fill the world and the ages with his influence.

### *A Deeply Thoughtful Citizen*

He studied the scriptures with that interest and insight which made him so masterful in the knowledge and use of them. On Sabbath days he worshipped with his neighbors in the town synagogue. Sweetest of all days in the week to him was the Sabbath, with its rest after the hard week's toil and its opportunity for thought and conversation about the mysteries of religion and the burning problems of his native land, the people being in great distress economically and constantly in a state of political excitement.

He studied nature. Behind the observant eye, which nothing escaped, was that insight which penetrated the heart of things. He saw the Father's love in the sparrow's life, his providence in the lily of the field, and was familiar with the changing aspects of the earth and sky. He saw the impartial and wonderful love of God in the sunshine and showers which bless alike the good and evil.

He observed the ways of men. He saw in their conduct and in the institutions of society the soul debasing and life distorting pressure of selfishness. The greed of the Roman government burdened his country with taxes, while Jewish landlords and exploiters of labor and market were driving their fellow citizens to des-

pair and fury. To one so keenly conscious of life's better possibilities this intense and merciless greed seemed like moral madness.

### *A Lover of His Country*

He loved his country with that intensity which moral passion gives to patriotism, and well knew the traditions which linked its sacred places with names immortal. At Joseph's knee and from Mary's lips the eager boy had taken in the wonderful story of Israel. From Abraham's sojourn in a strange land to the last desperate revolt of the Maccabees the story was familiar to him. How often, when the sky was red with sunset, had he climbed to the top of the great hill above the town and looked southward toward those regions where Abraham had reared his altars, where Isaac had spread his tents and Jacob pastured his flocks. To the patriot Jesus this land was holy because it had been consecrated by the tears and blood and deathless devotion of many generations. The bones of the fathers were in it, and on Mount Moriah, sacred with memories of David and Solomon, the holy temple stood.

He keenly felt the shame of Israel and saw the peril of her situation. He shared the anger of his countrymen at the Roman rapacity that was plunging his people into hopeless poverty. But if he deplored the greed of Rome and the insolence which profaned the Holy City with the emblems of a pagan faith, he deplored still more deeply the moral and religious backslidings of his own people. How tolerable were all other evils compared with the blindness and sin of Israel.

While Sadducees were hobnobbing with foreigners and courting the favor of pagans, the Pharisees were deep in the mire of false tradition and practical ungodliness. The religious politics of the day misconceived the real source of their troubles and the true way of

deliverance. Their burdens were largely self imposed. Their real affliction was selfishness, and from this there was no escape through those sacrifices over which the priests presided, or through the petty ceremonialism of the Pharisees, or through the Zealot's bloody program of violence. The only hope was in a great national revival of kindness, justice and brotherhood. How intensely Jesus hoped that the slumbering conscience of the nation might be aroused before it was too late.

How often in his home at Nazareth did he feel the prophetic fire burning within him. While talking about these great matters with his fellow townsmen how often had he wished that he might speak his convictions to the whole nation. How often did that enthusiasm which thrilled him as a boy in the temple suggest that his Father might be calling him to a prophet's task.

### *Great Excitement in Judea*

While his hands were occupied with daily toil and his mind was busy with the problems of his own life and his nation's welfare there came to Nazareth tidings of a great awakening in Judea. A mighty prophet had come out of the wilderness and was preaching at the Jordan, and the people were flocking to him from all parts of the land.

We do not know whether John the Baptist had suddenly aroused the people or whether this excitement was a climax of months or even years of preaching; but we do know that he was moving the people as no prophet had moved them before.

The power of his ministry was partly due to his unique and austere personality, his thrilling announcement that "the kingdom of heaven" was at hand and that the Messiah, unrecognized, was already on earth; and it was partly due to the fact that now, for the first time in a hundred years, religious excitement was

taking a turn that was not political, ceremonial or militaristic.

John's movement was practical, ethical, moral. He demanded kindness, sympathy, justice, brotherhood. He did not ask the people to take up arms against foreign oppressors, as the highlanders of Galilee and the shepherds of Peraea had done more than once. He did not summon them to a more careful observance of the petty ritual required by "the tradition of the elders," nor did he emphasize the claims of the priesthood to temple tithes and offerings. He solemnly called them to repentance before God for practical unrighteousness to men, a repentance manifesting itself in social justice and kindness. His preaching ignored religious trifles, emphasized moral essentials and took hold of men's hearts and consciences.

### *Plain Talk From a Strange Preacher*

This weather tanned man, with blouse of camel's hair, and leather belt around his waist, with gaunt frame and emaciated features, with flashing eyes and tones that thrilled with passionate conviction, quailed not before those religious leaders whose apathy or misguided zeal left the people spiritually unshepherded. He denounced them as a brood of vipers, and those who were so far moved by his religious appeals as to seek baptism along with others, he commanded to show the fruit of penitence in their lives, instead of presuming upon the fact that they were children of Abraham.

Some of those Jews who served the Roman government as tax collectors approached him for baptism, saying, "Teacher, what are we to do?" He did not tell them to leave the service of the government, but knowing how some of these men grew rich by extortion, he gave an answer that cut to the quick, saying, "Exact no more than your instructions call for."

Soldiers asked him, "What are we to do?" and his

answer was, "Never extort money, never make false accusations, and be content with your pay." To others inquiring what they should do he said, "He who has two coats, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise."

### *The Messiah at Last*

Here is a preacher facing his excited countrymen who are angry at foreign oppressors, and telling them to cease wronging one another; telling those who talk about other people's sins to repent of their own, to be just and merciful and help one another; who, instead of arousing them to fight a foreign despot, tells them to slay the tyrant in their own hearts, to do the good and shun the evil that they know.

The people are hoping that God will soon manifest his anger against their conquerors; but John is fearful of the divine judgment upon Israel, unless the nation can be brought to repentance. He urges the people to repent and receive his baptism as a token of it, telling them that he is only a herald of the Messiah that is coming, whose baptism will not be a water symbol, but a spiritual fire.

While John's preaching smote the conscience of the nation, his assurance that the Messiah would soon appear fanned all the smouldering embers of patriotism into flame. The fullness of time has come. The Messiah at last! He is already on earth and will soon appear. Why not believe it? Does not this prophet know? This wonderful man fresh from his communing with God in the desert, this man who is speaking to their consciences as no man had spoken before? No wonder the tidings of this prophet ran like wildfire through the land, and that the whole nation felt the thrill of his enthusiasm.

*Jesus Abandons His Shop*

Jesus had been doing carpenter work for about eighteen years, but the work was getting irksome, for his heart was burning within him and the feeling grew that the Father had something more important for him to do. Daily discussion about matters of great public importance filled him with desire to carry to other communities his protest against ignoble conduct, and especially against the war spirit which threatened the destruction of the nation through another conflict with Rome. And when in Sabbath meditation or early morning vigil he communed with the Father on the hills that stood about the town, or lifted his face toward heaven in the star glow of a summer night, the conviction grew that duty and destiny were calling him to another task.

And now came tidings of this great preacher in the wilderness and his solemn call to repentance and a better life. Here was a movement which his whole soul approved, and it may have been with a presentiment that his carpenter's work was done that he laid down his tools and joined those who went from Nazareth to hear the preacher by the Jordan.

He stood in the crowd and his pulse beat faster as he heard John uttering the very sentiments which he had so often declared to his Nazareth neighbors. Here, at last, was preaching that went to the root of things, that swept impracticable traditions and religious trifles out of sight, preaching that vibrated with moral passion, that summoned men to holiness and humanity. Here was hope for Israel. There was salvation in this movement if it should prove strong enough to carry the nation along, and this seemed possible. Surely the kingdom of heaven is at hand if men heed this prophet, for their repentance and reformation will make Israel God's kingdom indeed.

*The Baptism of Jesus*

Whether Jesus and John had known each other previously is uncertain. Possibly a brief acquaintance with Jesus at the Jordan gave John an insight into his wonderful personality before he presented himself for baptism. John felt unworthy to baptize the greater man who stood before him. He said, "I have need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" Jesus replied, "Let it be so," and John baptized him. And even as they stood upon the river bank, John gazing with awe on Jesus, the latter lifting his heart and yielding his life afresh to the Father whose momentous work he was undertaking, there came to both an assurance that God was calling the carpenter of Nazareth to a great providential task.

*Waiting in the Wilderness*

It is easy to believe that before his baptism Jesus had presentiments of his great mission, and it may be in vain to inquire by what steps in his subsequent experience he came to a definite understanding of his task. Luke says concerning the boy Jesus that he "increased in wisdom," and this must have been true of his manhood also, for every normal life is a process of knowing and becoming. Though John may have continued his ministry with a more buoyant soul, Jesus was soon struggling with a perplexity and suspense that drove him into solitude for prayer and meditation. This is what we must understand by the trial, or temptation, of Jesus in the wilderness.

Alone in the desert he wrestles with the problem of his mission. As the spiritual leader of Israel, what must he now do? Standing at the focus of age long prophecy, in the supreme crisis of Israel's history, how shall he proceed to accomplish his task.

The scriptures leave him in doubt at the point where he needs light. They glorify the character and



achievement of the Messiah, but do not clearly state his method. They picture one upon whom "the spirit of the Lord shall rest," "the spirit of counsel and might," who will judge and reprove righteously, who will bring joy and peace to Israel, and "make her a light for the gentiles." They point to a golden era when men shall "beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks," when "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

But how shall this glorious result be accomplished? In one breath the prophet says, "He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked," while in another he says, "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." On one page the prophet pictures a mighty warrior whose garments are stained with the blood of enemies trampled down in furious wrath, while another page describes a suffering servant whose blood redeems the people for whom he dies, "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, despised and rejected of men, brought as a lamb to the slaughter."

Must he do the Father's will and the Messiah's task in one of these two ways, or are these only two aspects of one way which he can not clearly see? Terrible suspense, when heart and conscience move to action, but the way of duty is not clear; when the soul, aflame with divine enthusiasm and burdened with unutterable responsibility, is uncertain what to do.

### *Foreigners, Taxes, Poverty, War*

How swiftly were economic distress, religious fanaticism, political desperation and race hatred hurrying Israel into another war, a war that would drown the nation in blood! The steady stream of Greek immigration and the tightening coils of Roman power seemed

to the common people portents of death to the civilization founded by Abraham and the institutions given by Moses. Foreign deities were challenging the supremacy of Jehovah, while pagan sports of the circus and amphitheater were tempting Israelites to forsake the temple and synagogue. The foreign population was large in certain sections, notably Decapolis, and the Romans were doing their utmost to strengthen these centers of foreign influence. Jews grown rich in distant lands, where they had imbibed foreign ideas and learned foreign tongues, were coming back to settle down in their native country, bringing heterodox ideas and heathen customs with them, and spreading the contagion of foreign manners. A moneyed aristocracy was hobnobbing with the gentiles, acquiring Roman citizenship through political service or money payments, sporting alien styles of dress, patronizing heathen amusements, adopting gentile names for themselves and children. The race pride and prejudice necessary to protect Jewish society against foreign influence were, in strategic places, breaking down.

As if these conditions were not sufficiently afflicting to the loyal Jew, there was growing economic distress among the common people. The Jewish landlord, the broker, the tax agent and the business exploiter were adding rent and interest and boodle and extortion to the burden of Roman taxation, until the common people were well nigh desperate. Such conditions as brought on the Maccabean wars of independence two hundred years ago were now recurring, but the glorious issue of those wars could not be repeated, for the Greek tyrant against whom the Maccabees led a revolting nation was a mere pigmy compared with Caesar.

### *Murmur of the Coming Storm*

Nevertheless another war seemed inevitable, for though the religious rulers and moneyed aristocrats of Israel realized the peril and resisted the pressure of

the independence movement, their authority over the common people was breaking down. The temple traffic and extortion of the Sadducees were a national scandal and the pious show of the Pharisee who "robbed orphans and devoured widows' houses" excited general contempt. Comfortable profiteers in the midst of suffering and calamity might counsel submission to pagan rulers, while this endless stream of Greek immigration was flooding their native land; but the common people, losing hope in their struggle for daily bread and for their ancestral customs and institutions would not forget Joshua, Gideon, Barak, Maccabeus and other warriors of Israel who had again and again put "armies of aliens to flight" through the assistance of Jehovah against incomputable odds. Every psalm read in the synogogue or chanted around their campfires by pilgrims to Jewish festivals confirmed their faith that these war miracles might be repeated.

In spite of prudent counsels by men at the top of Jewish society, the war party steadily grew in Israel, and the danger was only aggravated by talk about the Messiah, for these messiahs had, one after another, left a trail of blood behind them. John's preaching by the Jordan might well scare the rulers, for though it was a solemn call to turn away from greed and lust and selfishness, it announced the coming of a king that was not Roman, a Messiah whose axe was ready for the tree of evil, whose "fan was in his hand to thoroughly cleanse his threshing floor," and whose consuming fire was ready for the chaff. And whatever John might mean by his crusade against wrong and greed, the crowds who heard him regarded that crusade as moral and religious preparation for the coming conflict with Rome, and the Jewish rulers knew it.

### *Terrible War Memories*

Jesus knew it too, and he could not, in lonely contemplation among the hills, see how it was possible to

satisfy the people's expectations. He could not be a military messiah. He abhorred war, and must, absolutely *must* prevent it. What a vivid and terrible memory to him were stories told at Nazareth of that revolt against Rome occurring near the time of his own birth, and of Rome's bloody vengeance on the patriots of Galilee and the staggering indemnities laid on their cities and towns. Nor could he forget that uprising in Jerusalem which resulted in the partial burning of the temple, the looting of its treasury, the slaughter of a multitude of citizens and the piratic war which broke out all over Judea, Peraea and Galilee, when the people flew to arms, crying, "No king but God; no tax but the temple tribute; taxation is slavery; submission to a foreign despot is treason to God; death to traitors."

Sword and torch were busy, and while patriots and foreigners mingled their blood in battle, Galilean skies were red by night with the glare of burning towns and by day the smoky columns stood upon the hills. Rome soon smothered the flames of war, laid heavy fines on the revolting communities, and, as an awful warning, crucified two thousand Jewish patriots along the highways. Must these things be repeated and even worse things come?

Jesus had spent his life in the midst of this independent movement, whose promoters were called Zealots. It was still a rising tide in Peraea and Galilee, and even this wilderness where in lonely anxiety he fasts and prays is infested with uncaptured rebels against Rome, whom the authorities are hunting down as robbers, but whom the common people regard as patriots.

### *War and a Throne*

Could this be the Messiah's task, to smite the oppressor with the sword, to break the power of Rome over Israel, to make Jerusalem supreme and reign in glory there? Was it such a vision as this that kindled Israel's rapture?

It was inevitable that such questions should come to one thrust suddenly and providentially into a great prophetic task, and it was equally inevitable that one of Jesus' temper should reject the suggestion utterly. What! Lead armies to battle and come to a throne stained with the people's blood? Impossible! And how could war, even if successful, usher in the kingdom of God? To follow the war-god was to fail though all the kingdoms of the earth were won. The suggestion that he should follow such a course seemed to him like a suggestion of the devil, and he remembered that it was written, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve." No military messiah could usher in that peace pictured by the prophet. Even if Isaiah dreamed it, it was a mistaken dream, and the people's hope must fail! The one thing perfectly clear was that the people could be saved from economic wrong, race hatred and war madness only by a moral and religious revival of the nation.

### *Dedication to His Task*

Realizing that he was being thrust by providence into the role of the prophet, he realized the difficulty and danger of his undertaking. Many a prophet had preached and perished and the nation had not only remained unsaved, but had upon it the added guilt of the prophet's blood. Could he expect more from his own preaching? Yes, if this were really "the fullness of time," divine power would be given to him in this crisis of history, and God's will would be accomplished.

Henceforth this purpose to reform the nation strung to utmost tension all the energies of his being. In case of failure, he foresees the consequences to himself and to his people; but the salvation of the nation and the possible glory of a new era nerve him for the struggle. To this task he is committed not only by a patriot's love and hope, but by that religious faith which is the deepest fact and the essential genius of his nature, and this faith supports him in every trial.

## CHAPTER TWO

### AN ITINERANT PREACHER

After his long meditation in the wilderness Jesus returned to the Jordan and entered heartily into the work which John had begun. There was plenty of room for any number of workers in the crowds around John. In the intervals of his preaching and on the fringe of the crowds around him any intelligent and forceful speaker could get an audience, and Jesus soon became a conspicuous figure, especially interesting to those who had come from Galilee. John welcomed the help of Jesus and rebuked the jealousy of those disciples who envied his growing popularity. "A man gets only what heaven grants him," he said, "and he has a right to the people's favor. I rejoice in him. He will grow greater while I grow less."

With increasing confidence and power Jesus worked along side of John until the latter, who was now at the zenith of his power, was thrown into prison. The fourth gospel indicates that Pharisaic pressure from Jerusalem had much to do with his arrest, though a personal reference by him to Herod's scandalous conduct with his brother Philip's wife may have been the immediate occasion of it. When John's imprisonment scattered the people who had gathered to hear him, Jesus thought it expedient to retire to his own country. He had already attracted the attention of the Jerusalem authorities and won the confidence of John's Galilean disciples, some of whom attended him on his return to the north.

There were good reasons for avoiding Judea, at least for awhile. It was the stronghold of the priest, the rabbi and the moneyed aristocrat, all very sensitive to danger from a free movement in religion. It had been easy to organize their movement against

John and force the hand of Herod, because they were close to the scene of his labor and the people were more completely under their control. They would find it more difficult to resist the new movement in Galilee, where a larger infusion of gentile blood and thought made more room for new ideas. Being a Galilean himself, Jesus could hope to be better understood there, and if he succeeded in the north, he might finally go south backed by the acknowledgement of his own people.

### *His Samaritan Ministry*

One route to Galilee lay through Samaria, and he took this route. Pausing one day at the village of Sychar, he requested a drink of water from a woman who came with her water jar to the old historic well of Jacob. Knowing the contempt which most Jews felt for Samaritans, the woman expressed surprise at his request, and was still more astonished when he began to talk about the "living water" which one may drink and never thirst again. This cryptic reference to the divine life which sustains a trusting soul was followed by an allusion to her sinful life, which aroused her conscience and made her feel that she was in the presence of one divinely inspired. She said, "I perceive, Sir, that you are a prophet," and called attention to the age long controversy between her people and the Jews as to whether worship should be offered to God in the temple at Jerusalem or in the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim. He told her that both were wrong in their supposition that either temple was necessary to acceptable worship, saying, "God is a Spirit, and those who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

His declaration that the true worshiper needs no temple in his approach to God is worth attention by any one who seeks to understand his public ministry, for it shows how far he had gone from Jewish ortho-

doxy and partially explains the opposition of the priests and their final triumph over him. He believes that temple, altar, priest and bloody sacrifice are needless to those who perceive the true nature of God and approach him in the right spirit. There is no evidence that he obeyed or required his disciples to obey the law of sacrifice. No priest could ever excuse his attitude toward the national system of worship, and this indifference could easily be interpreted in subsequent controversies as actual hostility, and would lend color to the accusation that he welcomed that destruction of the temple which he foretold.

When the disciples, returning with food from the market, came to Jesus at the well, he exclaimed, "I have food that you know nothing about. It is food for me to do God's will and finish his work." Then glancing at the fields where men were sowing grain, he said, "Do you say that four months must pass before harvest will come? Look!" and he pointed at the people who, excited by the woman's report of a prophet at the well, were hastening to him. "I tell you," he said, "that the fields are already ripe for harvest, and he who reaps receives wages and gathers fruit unto eternal life."

### *Preaching to the Unwashed*

He was soon preaching to Samaritan crowds as he had been preaching at the Jordan, and yielding to their entreaties, he discontinued his journey for a couple of days. Cordial, gracious, sympathetic, unembarrassed, he was telling the good news of God and his kingdom to these Samaritans whom his own countrymen shunned and abhorred. The Samaritans must have been delighted, and the news of his work there must have spread through all that country.

Reports of this ministry must also have reached Jerusalem, where they would excite the fiercest anger and deepen the impression that he was a dangerous



radical. While to the priest it signified indifference to the national system of worship, it meant to the scribe a complete flouting of "the tradition of the elders" with respect to the proprieties of conduct, and tended to break down the barriers which had been so carefully built against foreign ideas and customs. It was a deadly insult to Jewish orthodoxy, and we need not wonder that in the final controversy with Jesus his enemies at the capital denounce him as a "devil possessed Samaritan."

On his return to Galilee he seems to have made headquarters at Capernaum. Possibly he was already unpopular at Nazareth, as a brilliant and earnest man, with a genius for pointed speech, is a constant irritant to his neighbors if he holds peculiar views on important subjects. Jesus' interest in social and religious matters had always been intense, and he had the courage of his convictions. He had long held and fervently uttered the convictions which he carried into his public ministry, and the attitude of the rabbi and the elders justified his subsequent remark that "No prophet is welcomed by his own people." It would be useless to begin his public ministry in Nazareth, for he had already talked and lived his message there for many years, and the orthodox had already rendered their decision against him. He could only hope that Nazareth would listen to him after he had won the favor of other communities. So he made the densely populated region of eastern Galilee the principal field of his labors and entered with great enthusiasm upon his work.

It was, as one writer tells us, "In the power of the Spirit," that Jesus returned to Galilee. All Galilee was soon aroused by his ministry. His former association with John the Baptist whetted the desire of the people to see and hear him, and now that John was in prison and his movement checked in the south, the people turned their attention to Jesus.

The burden of his preaching was the same as that

of John, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." He did not announce any messianic claims; he simply proclaimed the coming of the kingdom and called men to repentance, as John had been doing. So the center of the great revival passed from Judea to Galilee and the Galileans exulted in the fame and power of their great countryman. They thronged him from all directions, and he fascinated them by his discourses and astonished them by his miracles of healing. It looked for awhile as though he might have his way with the Galileans, and if they supported him he might be able to go back to the south and crush the official opposition that was resisting the better life of the nation.

### *A Wonderful Preacher*

This itinerant ministry of Jesus has no parallel in the history of Israel. Elijah lived in Jewish tradition for ages as a prophet unmatched in majesty and power, but he was a man of solitude, appearing in the nation's crisis to confront the enemies of its ancestral religion and to save the people from a great apostacy. Elisha a less imposing figure, is much like him, as he comes and goes in that stormy period. Isaiah and Jeremiah are heroic figures who fight their battles with kings and courts, but whose deep impression on the nation's history is due more to their written than to their spoken words. The same may be said of Amos, Hosea and many other prophets who illumine and at the same time glorify the story of Israel's life. John the Baptist, the great contemporary of Jesus, is a man of Elijah's solitary habits and austere spirit, emerging out of the wilderness to reform the nation, if possible, before it is too late.

*The Social Spirit of Jesus*

These have no marked resemblance to Jesus, whose unique personality suggests contrast rather than likeness. He is a man of the people, affable, companionable, social. His winsome, glowing, magnetic spirit draws the people to him, and he likes to have them around him. He welcomes the feast to which he is called, and even invites himself to dine with Zacchaeus, a social outcast on account of his hated business as a tax gatherer. He graces the wedding with his presence and scatters the gloom of funerals by his sympathy and power. His tears fall, even in the presence of the crowd, when his heart is touched by human suffering, and he is equally able to rejoice with those who are happy. There is little, perhaps nothing, in the story of his life to indicate that he was jovial and given to mirth, yet it is quite possible that he was so by nature, and that he greeted the humorous situation, the bright repartee, and the pretty pranks of children with generous, hearty laughter.

*The Dignity of Jesus*

But his friendliness was blended with such dignity as produced a feeling of awe. His condescension could not hide that greatness which made him solitary even in the midst of company. His affability did not encourage presumption on the part of his most intimate friends. Familiarity did not, in his case, breed contempt. The intimacies which he encouraged did not hide his greatness from his disciples, in whose conversation with him the note of reverence is nearly always present. Even his mother felt the spell of his spiritual greatness, her motherly affection losing itself in wonder as he passed from precocious boyhood into the sublime passion and strength of manhood. The disciples, who often misunderstood him and sometimes sought an explanation of his cryptic sayings, were also

sometimes "afraid to ask him," as a curious priest might hesitate to enter the "Holy of Holies" at any but the appointed time. The impulsive Peter ventured on two occasions to challenge his word or resist his will, but a word or look from the Master was sufficient to subdue his presumption. Though his life responded with utmost delicacy to the touch of human situations, the disciples recognized in his moods and sayings mysterious reactions to that unseen world in which he consciously lived and moved.

Even his enemies, on all but two occasions, feel the spell of his potent personality. On a certain day of his life the Herodians, Sadducees and Pharisees all conspired to force him into declarations that would compromise him with the multitudes, but the delegates they sent to ply him with hard questions fared so badly that "no man from that day forth dared ask him any question." The priest clad in his official robes, the Pharisee advertising his holiness by long tassels and big phylacteries, the rabbi zealously guarding the orthodoxy of his own town and synagogue, and the corpulent broker displaying his ill-got wealth on his person, might stroke their beards and sneer dissent to groups standing about them on the fringe of the crowd, but if they came to ask him a question or offer an argument, they greeted him courteously and called him "Rabbi." His imposing personality helps us to understand why his violent fellow citizens of Nazareth who had dragged him from the synagogue and were leading him with deadly purpose to the brow of a precipice, presently took their hands off and stood aside "while he passed through their midst and went on his way." Perhaps it also explains why some of those who sought him in the garden of Gethsemane shrank from his presence, even falling on the ground as they suddenly retreated when he approached them saying, "I am he," though they quickly recovered themselves and led him away.

*Personal Appearance of Jesus*

It is not probable that the prophet is referring to the personal appearance of Jesus when he says, "He hath no form or comeliness, no beauty that we should desire him." These words obviously apply to the suffering "Servant" of Jehovah, by whom, as the context clearly shows, is meant the persecuted, broken, but still faithful remnant of Israel. They need not be applied to Jesus. Though it is possible that his exalted nature was connected with an unattractive body, it is more likely that in him a noble form was wedded to a lofty spirit, and that his great soul beamed on men through a countenance that blended majesty and sweetness. This would help to explain the dignity which compelled the respect of friends and foes alike, yet charmed the little children who lay quiet in his arms, listening to a benediction they could not understand, and which also drew to his feet the penitent woman who wet them with her tears and wiped them with her hair.

*The Oratory of Jesus*

That his speech was arresting and powerful there can be no doubt. The most perfect expression is that which is learned in the school of conversation. Words spoken by an animated talker to a few friends, accompanied by those tones, inflections and gestures which nature prompts, suggest both the manner and matter of what is highest and best in expression. A little company of people discussing important questions is the best school of oratory, and animated, vivacious conversation is the best training; and it is only when the simple, natural habit of conversation is carried into the task of persuading multitudes that oratory reaches the climax of perfection. Those who are prompted to public speech by ambition, and who study oratory as a profession, as Demosthenes, Cicero and

others have done, are liable to mar public address by artifices and affectations which depart from nature and simplicity while seeking for effects. But when a perfect conversationalist is led by growing audiences and the passion for public good into a service which brings him daily before a multitude of people, and when heart and brain are on fire over issues that involve a nation's destiny, public expression arrives at perfect eloquence. Such we may well believe to have been the case with Jesus.

### *A Genius For Illustration*

Reading what he said, we recognize the directness and simplicity of his speech, the incessant play of a fruitful imagination and a perfect genius for illustration. He sees God's impartial love in rain and sunshine which bless alike the good and evil, and the minuteness of his providence in a loving care that feeds the birds and robes the lily with a splendor that Solomon never knew. He exhorts his followers to confident, trusting prayer, insisting that God is greater than the grumbling neighbor who grants the midnight loaf to a pleading friend for the unexpected guest, and better than the judge who grants the widow justice, not because she has a grievance, but because he does not want to be bothered by her any longer. He likens the gladness of angels over a tearful penitent to the glee of the poor woman who fingers her lost coin out of the sweepings of her house, and to the joy of the shepherd who finds his lost sheep before the wolves have devoured it.

### *The Humor of Jesus*

When people challenge his prophetic character by complaining of his conviviality, he replies that people now-a-days are like children in the market place dramatizing the wedding dances and the funeral pageant-

ries they have seen, some saying to others, "You don't dance when we play the pipe, and you don't pound your breasts when we howl." John had no use for feasts and dances, was solemn and terrible in his appeal to the nation, and the rulers said he had a devil; but when Jesus came, mingling joyously with the people and sitting down at their feasts, they say, "Behold a glutton and a tippler, a friend of tax-gatherers and notorious sinners."

This likening the graybeard's hypercriticism of prophets to the peevishness of children in their mimic weddings and funerals must almost certainly have excited the laughter of Jesus' listeners. So also would his reference to the squeamishness of the Pharisees about ceremonial trifles and their indifference to vital matters, when he says, "they strain out the gnat and swallow a camel." So would his thrust at the censorious hypocrite, when he says: "Why do you note the splinter in your brother's eye and fail to see the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the splinter from your eye,' when there lies the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite! Take the plank out of your own eye first, and then you will see how to take the splinter out of your brother's eye."

It should be remembered that what we have concerning Jesus in the scant memoirs of the disciples was determined by their own mood and interest in what he said and did. The tragedy which terminated his ministry, the tremendous issues of it in their own lives, the storm of persecution which henceforth beat upon them, the tremendous meaning of his mission on earth, the mystery and glory of his anticipated coming in the clouds of heaven—all these so engrossed their thought and conversation as to leave little space in their brief narratives for the mirthful and sunny side of his life.

*The Indignation of Jesus*

If it is easy to imagine a gleam of humor in Jesus' eye when his sharp drives move the crowd to laughter, it is easier still to see the flash of anger when he denounces the impious scribe and the sanctimonious Pharisee who will not enter the kingdom of heaven themselves, but stand before the door turning back those who would like to go in. When the Pharisees watched to see whether he would perform a healing act on the holy day, Mark says that he "looked at them with anger and vexation," knowing that the merciful act he was about to perform would strengthen their malicious purpose to destroy him. His eyes must have been fairly ablaze with indignation when he said to the temple traffickers, "Away with these! It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but ye have made it a robbers' den."

*His Paradoxes and Exaggerations*

Sometimes Jesus indulged in cryptic, enigmatical speech, and hinted at the treasure hidden in his words by saying, "He that hath an ear, let him listen to this." Sometimes he challenged attention by a bold metaphor or a perplexing paradox, as when he said of the bread and wine, "This is my body; this is my blood." "Let the dead bury their dead;" or "He that saveth his life shall lose it and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." Sometimes he compelled attention to a vital matter by a pertinent question, as when he said, "What shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul?" Sometimes he shocked his hearers into attention by downright exaggeration beyond all the bounds of possibility, as when he says, "It is easier for a camel to get through a needle's eye than for a rich man to get into the kingdom of God."

But the most outstanding features of Jesus' preaching were probably his encouragement to a simple



and childlike trust in the loving heavenly Father, his pleading for kindness and service to those around us, and the assurance and certainty with which he announced his convictions. What his insight discerned his lips announced without hesitation or debate. He needed not to verify his opinions by reference to tradition or scripture. Tradition was nothing to him and he would repudiate a law of Moses if it contravened his moral judgment.

### *Jesus Comes to Town*

The Galileans had never heard such preaching as this. Saint Mark puts it mildly when he says, "The common people heard him gladly." His preaching deeply moved them. When Jesus came to town the news flew swiftly along the main thoroughfares and down the cross streets and alleys: "The Prophet! The Prophet! Here comes the Prophet!" The people hurry in from all directions. Merchants come out of their stores and craftsmen out of their shops, while women and children who can not see from the ground run to the house tops and look down over the parapets. Accompanied by his disciples, Jesus comes down the street, his face aglow with friendliness and enthusiasm. Through the jam in the street they move on to the market place, where the voice of barter is suddenly hushed and the traders stand guard over their stuff. The crowd flows into the market place as water fills every indentation of a pool. For better view of the prophet some mount the carts in which they brought their produce to town, while others, crowded into a clutter of camels and donkeys, get on the backs of these patient animals and gaze.

### *Preaching In The Market Place*

Jesus delivers his message and the people listen with bated breath. Most of them are delighted beyond

measure, but some of the more orthodox, who, in this jam of people, try hard to keep from touching Greeks, Italians and others of contemptible breed, stroke their beards and scowl and shake their heads. They do not like his hard hitting at the "tradition of the elders," his contempt for their ceremonial trifles, his biting criticism of those who make more of tithing and fasting than of kindness and justice. They do not like his references to big tassels and broad phylacteries and the street prayers by which some people advertise their piety while foreclosing mortgages on widows' homes and sending honest but unfortunate debtors to prison. The sanctimonious broker, whose large diameter and aggressive abdomen threaten religiously improper contacts in this motly crowd, does not like his exhortation to substitute heavenly for earthly treasures by costly benevolence to the hungry and ragged; and he notices with disgust that Matthew, that renegade Jew who collects taxes for Rome, who came to him not long ago for his tax to the imperial government, is right there close to the Nazarene, listening with pride and joy to what he says.

### *Discussing The Preacher*

Jesus concludes his discourse and moves on through the town, followed by a vast crowd, women, children, aged people, unemployed, nearly everybody not detained by business or necessity. The streets are emptied, the market place almost deserted. Disgruntled listeners now have a chance to talk things over. They see danger in this Nazarene and his doctrines. This movement is worse, if possible, than that of John the Baptist. It is sure to make trouble. It will break down the respect of the people for their religious leaders and undermine the temple and synagogue. It will destroy the race pride and religious scruples necessary to save Israel from this invasion of foreign ideas and manners. This friendliness to foreigners and to the

godless riff-raff of society is dangerous. Not a word in all this talk for the priests and their sacred functions at Jerusalem! People are directed to their closets rather than to the temple and the synagogue for prayer! And this pacifism! As if we ought to submit to our enemies and pay taxes forever rather than to fight! "Turn the other cheek to the smiter!" "Blessed are the peacemakers!" "Bah! What would Gideon or Barak or grand old Judas Maccabeus say to that?"

An old veteran of the Zealot war, whose cheek is scarred by a Roman saber and whose dark eyes burn with fierce anger above his white beard exclaims: "Yes, and when the Messiah comes to lead us against our enemies and put down the heathen and move the world's capital from Rome to Jerusalem, what will he think of this miserable pacifism that says, 'The meek shall inherit the earth,' and calls 'peace makers the children of God!'"

### *Preaching In The Country*

Going on through town into the open country where his crowd will not interfere with business, Jesus resumes his discourse. All sorts of people are in his audience. Their many colored outer garments would give the multitude a picturesque and gala appearance, if the garments were not, for the most part, old, soiled and faded. In some cases the outer robe is gathered at the waist by a leather belt, others use a string or a strip of cloth for a belt, while on others, especially the children, the robe hangs loose and free from the shoulders. A cloth tied about the head protects it from the sun. The arms are sometimes bare, some times protected, and the feet are generally bare, though sometimes shod with sandals.

There are present farmers, fishermen, artisans and merchants whose curiosity has been strong enough to interrupt their business for a time. The aged, the

infirm, the cripples who fell behind the procession have finally caught up and are now before him. So also are the women, some with babies at the breast and some holding children by the hand. All eyes are riveted on the Nazarene as he goes on talking about the fatherliness of God, brotherhood among men, the good time coming when God's will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven. Their lips fall apart in wonder and their faces light up with joyous hope as he pictures the gladness of God's earthly family when all come to know and love him and behave like brothers and sisters before him.

As Jesus resumes his journey, some of the people return to their homes, excitedly discussing the prophet's words and encountering now and then the caustic criticism of a synagogue elder, but for the most part undaunted in their faith and enthusiasm. Others follow Jesus as he proceeds along the country road to the adjoining town. People working in the fields come down to the road, suspecting from the crowd that the prophet is in the midst of it, and follow along hoping for an audience. The prophet does not disappoint them, for he pauses under a wide spreading sycamore tree and talks again about the kingdom of heaven. With their fields stretching out in every direction around him, he repeated again and again those parables of which the people were so fond and which the disciples remembered so well.

### *Getting Disciples*

Sometimes he preached on the wide pebbly beach of the sea of Galilee, sitting or standing, it may be, on the upturned bottom of a fisherman's boat, and one day when the multitude was very large he got into a boat and had his friends take it a little distance from shore, and from it he preached to the people crowding down to the water's edge.

Once while he was walking along the strand he saw

Simon and Andrew, whose acquaintance he had made by the Jordan where John was baptizing. The brothers were near shore plying their trade as fishermen when Jesus persuaded them to join him in the great work he was doing, saying, "I will make you fishers of men;" and they left their nets and followed him. He also invited into his fellowship James and John, the sons of Zebedee, whom he found in the boat with their father mending their nets, and they also went with him. Matthew, a fiscal agent of the Roman government, was also welcomed into the disciples' band.

### *A Sabbath At Capernaum*

The evangelists give us many glimpses of his un-resting and powerful ministry. Most of his work was done out of doors, in street, market place, open fields, or on the strand of the sea of Galilee; but on the Sabbath custom took him to the synagogue, which was sure to be crowded when he was there, where he taught, not in a cold and formal manner, but as one conscious of a mission from God, with heart and brain on fire. We shall better appreciate the draught which such work would make on a man's strength, if we remember that the service was rather informal, and the people had a right to ask questions and to make answers, and that teaching so revolutionary as his drew fire from thoughtful critics in the congregation. Teaching under such circumstances was taxing to a man's resources, patience and vitality. Even after the service at the synagogue the Sabbath could not be very restful to one as conspicuously in the public eye as Jesus, and when the Sabbath ended at sundown practically the whole community was at the door of the house where he was being entertained, clamoring for his attention to their sick, and for a continuation of his discourse. That strenuous Sabbath at Capernaum which the evangelists describe is probably typical of his Sabbath ministry.

*A Man Of Prayer*

The gospels call our attention to the prayer life of Jesus. Prayer is communion with the unseen. It seems to some men like looking into darkness from which there come no answering gleams of light, like speaking into a silence from which there come no answering voices, like talking through a veil beyond which there is nobody, or some one who only listens, but never replies. It was not so with Jesus. He realized the presence of the Father, was alive and sensitive to the unseen and eternal. This, if we may speak of him as we talk of men, constituted his religious genius. Men obsessed by time and sense can not understand one who realizes the facts and obeys the laws of the spiritual universe. To the earthliest of men he seems a fool, to the best of men a beautiful and divine mystery of goodness. This was the greatness of Jesus and the explanation of that power which we call miraculous. In him men see that Infinite Spirit who expresses himself in nature, producing unusual results through a soul who is unique in his relation to two worlds.

After this busy and trying day at Capernaum, Saint Mark tells us that "In the morning, a great while before day, Jesus rose up and went out and departed into a desert place, and there prayed." Thus after giving his body a little rest, he refreshed his soul, withdrawing from the society of men that he might realize more fully the companionship of God. And so while the hush of night and slumber were on Capernaum, and the starlight on the sea beside her, and the ripples murmured softly as they broke upon the stones and whispered to the oleanders blooming at the water's edge, Jesus, in the silence and solitude of nature was putting lips of prayer to a spiritual fountain and renewing his strength with fresh draughts of life. Thus he tarried and meditated and prayed while the stars were losing themselves in the grey dawn and the sky grew red above the hills of Bashan.

Finally Simon and his companions, who had been hunting for him everywhere, broke in upon his solitude. They said, "Everybody is looking for you," and he answered, "Let us go somewhere else, into the neighboring towns, that I may preach there also." And so, from day to day and from town to town, Jesus went on with his good tidings throughout Galilee.

## CHAPTER THREE

### JESUS ORGANIZES HIS MOVEMENT

While the excitement and crowds about Jesus increased, the people were confused as to just what his movement meant. If he could have been judged simply by what he said, he might have been understood; but people goaded to desperation by economic distress and divided by other issues into embittered factions are not able to judge a public man fairly and to see the real meaning of his words and deeds. They will judge him by what they conceive to be the bearing of his conduct on burning issues and make him responsible for their own inferences.

Considering prevalent notions of the Messiah as a deliverer from oppression, he could not claim to be the Messiah, in any sense, without being seriously misunderstood, and he made no messianic claim; but he could not talk about love and justice and the reign of God in human society without being suspected by many and proclaimed by some as the Messiah. This tended to make his movement seem political rather than moral and religious.

His difficulty was increased by the fact that the Jewish leaders everywhere resisted his movement. The Pharisees controlled the synagogues and through them promulgated what was known as "the tradition of the elders." Jesus defied and denounced some of these traditions, and the Pharisees, therefore, fought him with increasing bitterness to the end. He preached for awhile in the synagogues, but the time probably came soon when they were closed against him, and when he had no use for them, because no synagogue was large enough to hold his congregations. The Sadducees, whose extortion in connection with the temple market and coin exchange he hotly denounced, were



doing their best to put him in a false position. The Herodians, seeking to restore their family to power in Israel, saw danger rather than service to their cause in Jesus' movement, and were in the plot to break him down.

### *Embarrassed By The Zealots*

The Zealot movement proved his greatest embarrassment. The Zealots, pushing to the limit the separatist sentiments of the Pharisees, were determined to restore the old order of things, to get rid of the Roman government and clear the land of foreigners. The war party in Israel, they were growing in strength and hoped to accomplish their purposes through the help of the Messiah. They believed that divine intervention would make their next war successful, and some doubted whether the Messiah would appear until they had courage and faith enough to draw sword for their liberties.

Jesus' talk about the kingdom of God tremendously interested the Zealots, but a Zealot following tended to compromise him with Roman authority and make him look dangerous to Jewish leaders. More than he feared anything else Jesus feared this rebellion which the Zealots were fomenting. That he could stop their movement was doubtful; that the nation would be destroyed if the war came on was certain.

He soon realized that he could not win the Jewish leaders or make himself understood by the multitudes around him. He wanted a moral and religious revival of the nation, an ethical, spiritual, non-military movement; but he could not be understood by these crowds distressed by poverty, confused by religious strife and maddened by race resentments, while the leaders of temple and synagogue orthodoxy conspired to make him seem a heretic and impostor.

*A Night Of Prayer*

Facing a problem that seemed insoluble and burdened by a task that seemed impossible, there came an evening when "He went out into the mountain to pray and continued all night in prayer to God." They are greatly mistaken who think he lived in intellectual serenity, untroubled by grave anxiety as to what course he should take, and suspense as to what would be the issue of his undertaking. He prayed for wisdom to see his way and strength to do his work. He must find some means of giving coherency, definiteness and permanency to his movement. It seemed necessary to select, instruct and establish his disciples, and to create amid all this confusion a divine society which would exemplify the kingdom of heaven through the faith and life of its members. These will constitute the new Israel in the midst of the Israel that is going astray. They will be a divine family, true citizens of the kingdom of God on earth. Their worship of the Father will not require a bleeding lamb, a smoking altar or a perfunctory washing, but kindness, justice, sympathy, service, artless prayer and praise in home, in shop, in field, in closet worship or mountain meditation.

Through the long night, while the disciples rested in the village, the Master meditated in the mountain solitude, filling with anxious thought and prayer the hours that flitted softly and swiftly over the dreamless sleepers. But the all night vigil draws to a close. The stars grow dim as day approaches, and some stars of hope are fading in the soul of Jesus. There is a strange, sweet stillness in the mountains as the creatures of the night seek shelter and the creatures of the day are not yet abroad. The yelping of the jackal dies away in the distance, and the hoot of the owl and the whir of the night bird's wing are lost in the silence of the dawn, as Jesus watches the crimson tides of light streaming into the sky over the hills of Gadara.

To define and organize his movement, as he now plans to do, will be to throw the gage of battle at the feet of the Jewish rulers. They will know then, what they already suspect, that they must destroy him. Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians, Zealots will all be against him, for none of these groups seeks primarily a spiritual religion and a reign of love.

### *Appointing The Twelve*

Matthew says that Jesus, "seeing the multitudes, went up into a mountain, and his disciples came unto him;" and Mark, writing of the same event, leads us to suppose that Jesus went into the mountain to escape these multitudes, and adds that "He summoned the men he wanted, and they went to him." How many he summoned and how long he kept them and himself away from the impatient crowds we do not know, but we know his purpose.

He now designated twelve missionaries, known to us as the apostles, whose privilege it would be to remain with him and to receive the most intimate instruction, with a view to missionary work under his direction. Eleven of these were Galileans. Eight were citizens of Capernaum and Bethsaida, on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. These eight were the two brothers, Simon and Andrew, the brothers James and John, sons of Zebedee, the brothers James and Jude, sons of Alphaeus; Matthew and Philip. Nathanael, who is also called Bartholomew, was from Cana, a village close to Nazareth. Thomas and another Simon were also Galileans, the latter having been a member of the Zealot party. The only one of the twelve who was not a Galilean was Judas, from the town of Kerioth, in Judea.

These twelve were to be the inner circle of those multitudes whom Jesus would gather into a divine society. As the Jews looked back through ages to the twelve sons of Jacob as the patriarchs of Israel,

so these twelve missionaries would sustain the patriarchal honors of the new Israel; but they must also share its toils and perils with their Master. With him they would constitute the nucleus about whom the spiritual elements of society would crystalize in the kingdom of God on earth.

### *The Kingdom In The Midst*

His task and theirs would now be to take men out of the old Israel and build them into the new. This act, which constituted his followers a distinct sect, a church, as we would say, "The Kingdom," as he called it, struck at the prestige of the Pharisee and the dignity of the Sadducee. Discipleship to Jesus meant allegiance to another authority and dissolution of the bonds which held men to the synagogue and temple, though this was implicit rather than avowed, and his friends and enemies waited with almost equal suspense to see how far he would break with the religious establishments of Israel.

### *The Sermon On The Mount*

The institution of the apostolate was followed by a notable address delivered to the apostles and other disciples whom he had drawn into his mountain retreat. This discourse is known as "The Sermon on The Mount." With respect to the apostles it may be regarded as the sermon of ordination; with respect to his movement or society in Israel it may be considered his inaugural sermon.

Versions of this great discourse are given by Matthew and Luke, and in connection with other recorded sermons and sayings, make clear the message that with all the power of persuasive and passionate speech he urged upon the conscience of the nation. His central idea was that God is a Father whom his human children ought to love whole-heartedly and

trust implicitly, and that these human children, being members of a divine family, ought to love one another like brothers and sisters. These central affections should outlaw the care which burdens human life and the pride and greed which fill the world with strife. Instead of laying up treasures on earth, men ought to lay up treasure in heaven, and this is done by helpful deeds to the needy and suffering here. And this loving service should not be confined to the narrow circle of relatives and neighbors, but should embrace the outcast and the enemy, like that goodness of the Father who "makes the sun to rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the just and the unjust alike." Repudiating the law of retaliation laid down by Moses, he insists that men should return good for evil and conquer hatred by love. Those who make peace through the patient overtures of love are the real children of God, and there is no place in true patriotism or religion for the bloody program of war. He emphasizes the inwardness and aspiration of religion rather than its outward show, saying that "God is a Spirit," to be worshipped in spirit and truth. It is not the touch of unconsecrated things or the eating of unhallowed food that makes a man unclean, but an evil impulse of the heart. Adultery is in the lustful glance as well as the unclean act.

He said that he had not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill it, and that they would never "see the kingdom of God," unless they became better men than the scribes and Pharisees. He urged them not to be discouraged because he pointed them to a narrow and difficult way, declaring that only false prophets offered salvation on easier terms.

His teaching amazed the people. It was not elementally original, not fundamentally new, for it all centered in the two great commandments, "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself." But there were jubilee and ecstasy in his preaching of the old law, because he really did love

God with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself, and on his lips the letter that seemed like bondage became liberty and life. And he called this preaching which summoned men to an almost unearthly goodness "Good News;" for that is what the word "gospel" means. He was offering this life of the "kingdom" as a heavenly banquet to famishing and unhappy souls. He told them it was a precious pearl for which they could afford to give everything else.

Such fearless and untrammelled preaching, such positive and passionate speech they had never heard before. He was speaking home to men's souls out of his own soul, not about religious trivialities, but about the vital things of character and life. He was already living what he said, and his speech quickened the pulses and flushed the temples of his hearers and throbbed like a new life through his vast assemblies.

### *An Attempt At Nazareth*

How long it was before Jesus made an attempt to win his old fellow townsmen we do not know; but the Nazareth people thronged their synagogue one day with eager expectancy, for Jesus was in town and would certainly be at the Sabbath service. His best friends were anxious and his enemies were determined. After some preliminaries of prayer and song he was permitted to speak. He introduced his sermon by reading a portion of Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has consecrated me to preach good tidings to the poor; he has sent me to proclaim release for captives and recovery of sight for the blind, to set free the oppressed, to proclaim the Lord's year of favor."

Looking straight into the eager faces before him, he said, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing," meaning, doubtless, that God was moving him to proclaim as something near at hand the blessed era which Isaiah had foretold. One must turn to the rhapsodies

of the second Isaiah to get a picture of that social blessedness which the prophet set before the preacher and his audience that day in the synagogue at Nazareth. For awhile, as Jesus interpreted and applied this scripture, there were expressions of approval from the audience, as the people hung upon "the gracious words which fell from his lips."

But this picture of world peace and plenty had implications which it was necessary to state before he got through, for he had dedicated himself to the task of declaring unwelcome truth when that was necessary to individual and social welfare. He had to draw this picture of God's kingdom against the dark background of Israel's actual life and call attention to her religious vanities, her social wrong, her race hatred and war madness.

He touched a sore spot when he met the issue as to what should be done about the foreigner. Well what could be done by God's people but to recognize the honest, law abiding foreigner as a member of the divine family and to treat him as a brother? He could have reminded his hearers, and perhaps he did remind them, that Moses had said: "You shall not oppress a foreigner, for you know the feelings of a foreigner, seeing that you were yourselves foreigners in the land of Egypt. If a foreigner sojourn in your land, you shall do him no wrong. The foreigner that sojourns with you shall be as the home-born among you, and you shall love him as yourself: for you were foreigners in the land of Egypt."

### *The Congregation Becomes A Mob*

A plea for the foreigner seemed outrageous to those who regarded him as an untouchable and especially to those Zealots who hoped yet by a holy war to clear the land of aliens. But Jesus stood his ground, maintaining that God thought better of foreigners than they did. He reminded them that Israel had many widows

when the country was famine smitten in the days of Elijah, yet the prophet was sent to none of them but to a widow of Zarephath, in Sidon, a foreign land; that although there were many lepers in Israel in Elisha's time, that prophet brought healing to none of them, but only to Naaman, and he was a Syrian.

This was more than the synagoguers could endure. Who was Jesus that he should challenge the authority of venerable teachers who regarded the foreigner as a deadly menace to religion and patriotism alike? Who, indeed, but a fellow townsman who had grown up among them, a common laborer, the son of a carpenter, whose brothers and sisters were here among them? They would listen no longer. Crowding up to the platform, they dragged him down and drew him out of the building. Then, meaning to destroy him, they hustled him toward a precipice; but their deadly purpose faltered before they could accomplish it, and Jesus, "passing through their midst, went on his way."

Elsewhere in Galilee he continued his great work, and the eagerness of the people to hear him was enhanced by the apostles, whom he sent out by twos, not merely to announce his coming, but to proclaim the message which they had learned from him. Three or four flying visits to Jerusalem scarcely interrupted that strenuous work in which he was laying out all his strength, preaching daily to great multitudes and conferring privately with those whom the net of public discourse drew into the company of his more intimate disciples.

### *His Family Anxious*

The stress of this ministry which scarcely allowed him time to eat and sleep gave his best friends deep concern, especially as in his fight against religious error and social wrong his departure from orthodoxy became more radical and his heresy more outstanding.



The members of his family became anxious, not only about his health, but about his sanity; for they never had dreamed from his talk in private life that he would go to such lengths in denouncing the religious leaders of the nation. Mark says that his family, having heard how things were going, "set out to get hold of him," declaring, "He is out of his mind;" and the writer of the fourth gospel says, "Neither did his brethren believe in him."

Being informed that his mother and brothers were wanting to see him, he said, "Who are my mother and brothers?" Then, fixing his eyes on a group of disciples near him, he said, "There are my mother and my brothers. Whoever hears the word of God and does his will, the same is my brother, my sister, my mother."

This incident illustrates his genius for making every event talk for those great principles which he was proclaiming with all his power. He probably welcomed the interview sought by his relatives and did his best to justify his conduct in their estimation, but it was a part of his burden that he could not be understood by those dearest to him.

### *John The Baptist*

The imprisonment of John the Baptist must have been a great disappointment to Jesus and a sore trial to John, whose health and spirit were breaking in the monotony of his prison. He knew that Jesus was going on with the work in Galilee, but he shared the perplexity of others concerning him, and sent some of his friends to ask whether he were the Messiah, or whether they should still look for another.

Jesus said to the messengers who found him busy preaching to the multitudes and healing their sick, "Go back and tell John what you see and hear," adding, "Blessed is the man who does not lose faith in me." Then he declared to his disciples that in all their hist-

ory there had not been a greater prophet than John.

Herod Antipas, though himself only a mongrel Jew, had respect for John's character and did not wish to have his blood upon his hands; but Herodias, bent upon his destruction, accomplished by a trick what she could not do by direct appeal to her husband. When the latter had the chief men of his realm about him at his birthday banquet and the daughter of Herodias by her former husband delighted them all by her dancing, Herod complimented her by promising anything she might ask. When the astonished girl reported this to her mother, the mother said, "Ask for the head of John the Baptist." This she did, and Herod could not easily refuse what he had so publicly promised. So he ordered the execution, and the banqueters saw the head of the prophet presented to the dancing girl, who, in turn, delivered it to her mother.

Disciples of John brought the story of his death to Jesus at a time when he was greatly worn by his labors, and Jesus proposed to his own disciples that they go into "some lonely spot for a little rest." So, as privately as possible, they took boat and landed on the northeast shore of the lake. A short walk would have taken them to their mountain retreat, but they encountered a large company on the plain, and Jesus could not resist the temptation to tarry with them. Tarrying was fatal to rest for that day, for the people kept coming until there were thousands around him.

### *The Climax In Galilee*

The remark of the evangelist that Jesus pitied the people because they were "like sheep without a shepherd" suggests the mood of the preacher as well as the mental condition of his audience. Proceeding to shepherd these harried sheep, "he taught them many things." We have no record of this discourse, but must believe that he told them of the Father's loving care and of that unsleeping providence which birds

and flowers unconsciously proclaim. He must also have shown them how kindness and patience and love would banish hunger, greed and strife, and bring in the golden age so long foretold. His words went to their hearts with wonderful power. Such talk was like a cool, perfumed breeze to pilgrims staggering with blistered feet out of the burning desert; like the oasis' pool amid moss clad stones, at bottom of which one sees a finger of crystal pointing up from a fissure in the rock as he puts to it parched lips and swollen tongue; or like the manna which fell upon the famishing Israelites when they were hungry in the wilderness.

It was on this day apparently that the popularity of Jesus reached its climax, and the enthusiasm of the people passed all the bounds of prudence and reserve. Convinced that he was the promised Messiah, they proposed to force him into the role which he seemed reluctant to take, and the author of the fourth gospel says that Jesus, "perceiving that they were about to take him by force and make him king, withdrew again into the mountain by himself alone."

### *Crisis And Failure*

This great day which revealed the power of his personality revealed also the weakness of his movement. The people would not dissociate him and his movement from political messiahship. Their greatest and godliest countryman must be their political deliverer. Their determination to make a king of him gave his enemies a fresh chance to accuse him of being politically dangerous. The logic of the situation points to disaster. Sending his disciples away, and escaping from the multitude as quickly as possible, he braced his soul for the inevitable conflict and the great adversity which he saw at hand.

That night he climbed the mountain side alone and entered into the solitude with a heavy heart, and as he

climbed "the stairs of that great mountain altar" which lifted him up to God, the heavens grew dark with flying clouds and a great wind was rising.

News of the Baptist's death made his own martyrdom seem nearer. It would be sweet to die, even though misunderstood, if he could be sure that his movement would live and save his people from their approaching doom. But what prospect was there yet that the revival fire kindled by the Baptist and fanned to a great flame by his own ministry would purge the nation of its sin and folly, and save it from desolating social wrong and all-consuming war? If these people whose hosannas still rang in his ears had comprehended his teaching and entered into his kingdom, he could afford to die; but they had not.

Alone once more in the wilderness, the "Man of sorrows" wrestles with his doubts and fears; and on that mountain that lifts him up in the dark, wild night to the breath of the coming storm he enters into sweet communion with his Father. The tempest that soon broke on land and sea was emblematic of his coming tribulations.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### LAST DAYS IN GALILEE

Jesus' movement in Galilee came to its crisis when his popularity reached a climax that seemed prophetic of political action. The Zealots were ever ready to follow some leader in a bold stroke for independence. Many of them hoped for awhile that Jesus would become the leader of their movement, and the Jewish leaders, more intelligent as to the consequences of such a movement, feared that he would. His peril became acute when his popularity made him the daily center of wild hopes in some and wild fears in others.

These hopes and fears made it more needful than ever that he should emphasize the non-political character of that kingdom of God which he was proclaiming, and it is not until after the crisis in Galilee that his insistence upon the spiritual nature of the kingdom becomes so emphatic as to fix the attention of the evangelists and obtain mention in their memoirs. He says that the kingdom will not come with outward show. Men will not say, "Lo here!" or "Lo there!" for the kingdom has come already, is "at hand," is "within you," is "in the midst of you," and with trusting and obedient faith men are entering into it.

When some, discouraged by his failure to go on and accomplish his task in the anticipated way, began to leave him, their defection led him to say to his disciples, "Will you also go away?" and Peter answered, "To whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

#### *His Enemies Encouraged*

The priests and Pharisees, held in check for awhile by his overwhelming popularity became more aggres-

sive when some deserted him. He had constantly to face able men sent from Jerusalem to watch his movements and counteract his influence. These dignitaries deeply impressed the simple Galileans. They organized the opposition to him, and he had to face them everywhere, and their controversies ran the whole gamut of issues between the various sects and parties in Israel. While he drove home the vital doctrines of religion and morality they pestered him with casuistry about the trivialities of tradition and politics.

One must turn to the gospels themselves to realize the bitterness and power of the attack made upon him. They accuse him of violating the law concerning personal contacts and unsanctified foods, "making all foods clean." One aggravating phase of his radicalism was his sociability with outcasts and disreputables. Moreover he shocked them by his Sabbath activities. His answer to their charge of Sabbath desecration was, "My Father works unceasingly (even on the Sabbath), and so do I," his gracious and necessary work for men being like the Father's work in nature. How far he had gone from orthodoxy in his view of the origin and proper observance of the Sabbath we do not know. He argues that as the priests do their temple work on the Sabbath without sin, and as David properly fed his hungry men on the consecrated temple bread, there is evidently something greater than the temple and the Sabbath; it is man, for whom both temple and Sabbath were made. "The Sabbath was made for man," and God says, "It is kindness and not sacrifice that I want."

From charges which expressed or implied radical heresies in religion and essential treason to the nation they descended to the meanest insinuations concerning his personal character. They called him "a glutton and a tippler," a consorter with the vulgar and vicious. His answers were often hot with indignation, citing their practical nullification of the moral law, their oppression of the poor, their carefulness about temple

tithes while they were devouring widows' houses and making long prayers. He calls them "hypocrites and children of the devil," though in their religious zeal they "compass sea and land to make one proselyte."

### *Herod's Concern*

Herod Antipas was tetrarch of Galilee, and the excitement about Jesus finally challenged his attention. He exclaimed, "John I beheaded, but who is this about whom I hear such things?" Luke says that certain Pharisees warned Jesus of his danger, saying, "Get away from here, for Herod intends to kill you." If this was not an attempt of Jesus' enemies to scare him out of the country, we must think that some liberal minded Pharisees were kindly warning him because he was expressing convictions which they entertained but had not the courage to utter.

His peril became imminent when the suspicions of Herod were aroused. To continue his work in Galilee while synagogue leaders and influential delegations from the south were accusing him of treasonable purposes, was to court arrest, with death as an almost certain consequence. Luke says that, when warned of danger, Jesus replied in words which signified indifference to danger and contempt for Herod, adding, "It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem." It is difficult to think this report entirely correct, for Jesus knew that John the Baptist, whom he regarded as the greatest of the prophets, had recently been killed by this same Herod, in his own jurisdiction, far from Jerusalem.

Prudential considerations required the discontinuance of his work in Galilee, if he wished, as he certainly did, to push his campaign into Jerusalem. He had fought a hard battle; his enemies were making headway against him, and the region of his greatest popularity had finally become a place of danger.

For awhile, now, Jesus seems to have been a wand-

erer, and to some extent a fugitive, avoiding the sleepless and multiplying conspiracies against him by retirement to unfrequented places or by rapid movement to some distant point. During the last months of his life his journeys took him into the five provinces of Palestine, and he realized all the while that he was approaching the doom of the prophets murdered at Jerusalem.

First we see him in the region of Tyre and Sidon, not far, to be sure, from Galilee, and not beyond the region to which his fame had gone; for a Canaanite woman by some means recognized him and obtained healing for an afflicted daughter. But he could, for the most part, travel *incognito* in this country, and it is probable that an eastward journey brought him into the region of Caesarea Philippi, through whose villages he passed with as little notice as possible.

### *The Question Of Messiahship*

Away from the scene of his former labors, in the tetrarchy of Herod's brother Philip, he was comparatively safe. In this mountain retreat, where the sources of the Jordan are, he permitted his disciples to see the clouds which darkened his own prospect of coming days. "Who," said he, "do men say that I am?" When they replied that many considered him a reincarnation of one of the prophets, he said, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter replied, "You are the Christ."

The earliest and most reliable report of this conversation, as given by Mark, is closely paralleled by Luke; but to the words, "Thou art the Christ," Matthew adds, "The Son of the living God." Matthew also says that Jesus replied, "You are a blessed man, Simon, for it was not flesh and blood, but my Father who revealed this to you."

These words imply that there was not at that time among the followers of Jesus any tradition of his



super-natural origin. Peter's recognition of the lonely dignity of Jesus was a flash of inspiration, due, not to any story of his virgin birth, but to a perception of his sublime character and mission.

Matthew and Mark say that Jesus then charged his disciples that he should "tell no man that he was the Christ," and Luke puts the matter still more strongly, saying, "He charged them and commanded them that they should tell this to no man."

It is clear from these words that Jesus did not offer himself to the nation as its Messiah, or authorize his disciples to make this claim for him. He did offer himself as God's messenger to the nation, and if in some high and mystic sense he regarded himself as Messiah, that was a secret known only to the apostles, and too deep for their comprehension, betrayed, it may be, in the Jerusalem crisis by Judas alone, to enemies who could not or would not understand the real meaning of it, and finally acknowledged by Jesus at his trial, but even then qualified and explained to the satisfaction, probably, of Pilate, and emptied of all political significance by his words, "My kingdom is not of this world."

### *The Daily Cross*

The shadow of the cross which had now fallen definitely upon the path of Jesus was never lifted, was ever before him. Clearly, from this time on, he expounds to the twelve and to larger companies his sacrificial philosophy of life, his doctrine that love must deny itself and suffer while it serves. He says: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and follow me, daily bearing his cross. Whoever would save his life shall lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's shall save it. What profit is it if a man gain the whole world and forfeit his life? And having forfeited his life, wherewith shall he ever buy it back again?"

He is preparing now to leave Galilee, the home of his childhood, the dwelling place of his kindred, the scene of his quiet toil as a carpenter and of his public ministry. How dear to him was this beautiful lake whose bright waters he had often traversed and from which, in a fisherman's boat, he had preached to thronging thousands on the shore! How dear these fields through which he had walked with his disciples, beholding the Father's providence in singing birds and fragrant flowers! How dear these hills flanked with vineyards and orchards, and the villages that nestled among them!

The sadness of farewell to Galilee is emphasized by strong assurance of her coming calamity. The woes he had more than once pronounced on her impenitent cities were in his heart continually. The smoldering embers of race hatred, which foreign tyranny and false messianic hope were fanning, would yet burst into flame and fanatic war would desolate this lovely land. The blood of her inhabitants would stain these clear waters; the stench of her unburied slain would even drive the turtle doves from their oleanders, and these cities whose beauty the Galilean lake reflected would be heaps of ruin on her shores.

But the purpose of a great soul is stronger than its hopes and fears. Out of the ashes of its sorrow and the wreckage of its hopes it rises and defies the tyranny of circumstances. Even when all seems lost, it knows that something has been won, and it faces death knowing that it can not die. Jesus prepares to storm the central fortress of his foes. He will save his life in Galilee to lose it in Jerusalem. Losing it there, he will also save it; dying, he will lodge deathless truth and hope in the hearts of men.

### *Increasing Danger*

Jesus now more definitely warns his disciples of their danger. "Do not imagine," he says, "that I have

come to bring peace on earth. Families will quarrel and break up over my doctrines and manner of life. It will be son against father, daughter against mother, daughter in law against mother in law; but he who loves father, mother, son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. He must even hold his own life cheap if he wants to be my disciple. Who does not count the cost before he begins to build a tower, or what king goes to war without first comparing his strength with that of the enemy? If you wish to be my disciple, consent to lose all that you have."

To one who said, "I will follow you anywhere," he replied, "The foxes have holes and the birds have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."

The increasing danger and difficulty of his work and the strain of labor were telling upon his nerves and banishing the joy and optimism of his earlier ministry. He dreads the ordeal, yet longs to be through with it, saying, "I have come to throw fire on the earth. Would it were already kindled. I have a baptism to undergo, and how am I distressed until it is all over."

Though he warned his disciples, he aimed to prepare them for the shock of coming events rather than to destroy those hopes which he knew were vain, but which were needful to their continuance in the great enterprise, hopes that would be reborn and transfigured in the dawn that followed the darkness of his going. So while the Master in lonely greatness and sorrow contemplated the approaching tragedy, his disciples continued to hope that his popularity and power would yet overcome his enemies and fulfill the long defeated but undying hope of Israel.

The passover was drawing near, and Jesus, for awhile on the east side of the Jordan and then on the west, was moving toward Jerusalem. His friends hoped and his enemies feared that something decisive would happen on his arrival there. The chief priests and rabbis, dreading the advent of his mongrel crowd from Galilee and Peraea and the effect of his preach-

ing on the passover multitudes, prepared to defend themselves and the city against his influence.

### *Human Values And Service*

This brief ministry is fraught with incidents which show his sense of human values, his consciousness of social wrong and his feeling that the glory of life is goodness. He took little children into his arms and prayed for them, assuring his friends that any one who will not submit to God's kingdom with the meekness and trust of a little child will never see that kingdom at all, and that it would be better for a man to be thrown into the sea with a stone tied to his neck than to harm one of these little ones.

When people criticised him for associating with people of bad repute, he told those unforgettable parables of the lost coin, the lost sheep and the lost son, assuring his followers that there is joy in heaven over one sinner who turns away from an evil life.

Although Zacchaeus was regarded by the orthodox as a renegade Jew grown rich in the service of the Roman government, Jesus asked for entertainment at his home. The impropriety of fellowship with such a man was shocking to the orthodox, but Jesus did not care for that. His visit bore good fruit in the life of Zacchaeus, and before they parted the latter said to Jesus, "Look, Sir; I will give the half of all I have to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody, I will pay him back four times as much."

One day a wealthy young man, whose fine personality won his loving admiration, came to him asking the way of life. Jesus seems to have invited him to invest all he had in the great work which he was doing, and the young man turned sorrowfully away. Jesus then remarked to his disciples how difficult it was for a rich man to escape the snare of riches and enter the kingdom of God.

He emphasized the peril of selfish luxury in the midst

of want by the parable of the rich man at his banquet while a hungry beggar, with his flesh full of sores, lay at his gate; but death, which soon came to both, brought the beggar to bliss and the rich man to torment, and now the one-time voluptuary could not get so much as a drop of water from the man who once craved a crumb from his table.

His radical views on the subject of generosity and his frequent and hard hitting at greed for money and property excited the contempt of many, and Luke says that "The Pharisees, who were fond of money, and heard all these things, sneered at him."

That he deplored the scramble for wealth and had little respect for those monopolizing it is beyond reasonable question. In this connection it is interesting to note that the one New Testament writing outside the gospels which seems perfectly to reflect his sentiments on this subject is that epistle whose author is James, identified by tradition as the brother of Jesus. Urging the people not to be more courteous to the rich than the poor, James says: "Has not God chosen the poor in this world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom? Now you insult the poor. Is it not the rich who lord it over you and drag you to court? Come now, you rich men, weep and howl over your impending miseries."

This and more of the same sort seems like an echo of Jesus, whom Luke reports as saying, "Blessed are you, poor, for the kingdom of heaven is yours... But woe to you rich folk, for you have already gotten all the comfort you will ever get." Such words do not imply respect for all poor people and contempt for all rich people, regardless of character, but sympathy for helpless multitudes who are wronged and exploited, and disrespect for the wealthy few who selfishly profit by that wrong.

*Folks Who Lived The Golden Rule*

Though Jesus did not connect these sentiments of humanity with a definite economic theory, there was a sect in Israel which did so, namely, the Essenes, who are never mentioned in the gospels, but to whom Josephus, the Jewish historian, in his account of the sects of his time, gives more space than to any other sect. The extreme and fanatical members of this sect formed monastic brotherhoods in the Judean wilderness, where they cultivated their little valley fields and gave themselves to meditation and prayer.

While these Essene monks held absurd superstitions and impracticable theories of life, there were, according to Josephus, more practical Essenes, who entered into wedlock and reared children, and these had their communities in all the cities of Israel. They also had their synagogue at Jerusalem, and one of the approaches to the temple was known as "the Essene Gate." Though they sometimes brought gifts to the priests, they were not quite loyal to the national form of worship, doubting the value of the official sacrifices. They were accustomed to worship before day in secret chambers or natural solitudes, and endeavored to refrain until after sunrise from conversation about any but sacred things.

These people so greatly revered the name of God that they would not take an oath, deeming the simple "Yes" or "No" which truth required as binding as any oath. They believed that the souls of the righteous do not perish in death, or even await in sleep some future bodily resurrection, but that through death they escape into a better life.

They pledged themselves to "revere God, do justice to men, harm no one voluntarily or at the bidding of another, resist the unjust, help the just, be faithful to all men, not to use authority unkindly, not to outshine those set under them by superior display, to cherish truth, to unmask liars, to keep free from theft and unjust gain."

They despised riches and excited the wonder of outsiders by their charity to all men. On entering the community they delivered over to the brotherhood what they had not already given away, or if this were not done, they allowed it to benefit others equally with themselves. Among them were no small, no great, no rich, no poor, and they were probably the only people in the world who condemned slavery, calling no man master and no man servant, because they were all brethren.

They considered it especially meritorious to adopt and rear orphan children, and to obliterate in their communities all distinction between the home born and the adopted. They esteemed every aged man and woman as father and mother, every child as their own, all men and women as brothers and sisters.

They did not buy and sell among themselves, but turned the products of their toil into a common treasury, from which their stewards furnished food and clothing for all. They considered it a reproach to be rich in the presence of poverty, generously sharing what they had with others needier than themselves. They cared solicitously for widows, orphans and the aged. The Essene traveler, when he entered town, found the house of some Essene brother, where he was at home until he resumed his journey, when he was forwarded on his way, if necessary, with money and new raiment.

When Peter said to Jesus, "Lo, we have left all and followed thee; now what are we to get?" Jesus answered, according to Mark, "No one has left home or brother or sister or father or mother or children or lands for my sake and the sake of the gospel, who does not get a hundred times as much—in this present world homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and lands, together with persecutions, and in the world to come eternal life." The social system of the Essenes perfectly interprets this mysterious and seemingly impossible saying of Jesus, which never can be true in

any but a highly socialized and intensely fraternal order of society.

*Was John The Baptist An Essene?*

We note with interest that John the Baptist hailed from that Judean wilderness where the Essene monks had their settlements, and that when the people asked him, "What are we to do?" he announced an Essene principle of conduct, saying, "Let every one who has two coats give to him who has none, and let him who has food do likewise."

We notice also that the early church at Jerusalem followed the Essene custom with reference to property, "no one claiming that anything he had was his own, but they had all things common, distributing to each according to his need."

It is, to say the least, interesting that the white robes worn by Essenes on sacred and festal occasions as symbols of the purity for which they longed, reappear so conspicuously in those visions of the redeemed which glorify the pages of the Christian apocalypse of Saint John.

It may be significant also that Jesus, who often reproved scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees, never criticises this other notable and challenging sect, whose intense philanthropy he embodies in his doctrine of life and love.

*Essenes Won By Jesus*

What does it mean that this strange sect, whose spiritual and moral passion excited the wonder of men and the praise of Josephus in the first Christian century, completely and finally disappears in that century, and that the monastic institutions of Christianity first appear in that same wilderness of Judea where the Essene brotherhoods vanished?

We may well believe that the spirit and teaching of



Jesus appealed powerfully to these Essenes, that they felt the spell of his mighty personality and yearned toward him, as sea deeps feel the tug and sea tides answer the pull of heavenly bodies. Having listened with gladness and wonder to his words while he was in the flesh, they were drawn to him still more mightily when he became a divine magnet in the unseen world. And while, to some extent, scribes, Pharisees, priests and Sadducees finally went into the Christian movement, it is probable that the Essenes went into it in such large numbers that their sect was quickly and utterly swallowed up and lost in the stream of Christian history.

### *The Public Ministry Brief*

How long the public ministry of Jesus lasted we can only infer from gospel references to Jewish feasts and to seasons of the year. The synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) mention but one passover in their story of the public ministry, leaving us to doubt whether the public life of Jesus lasted even a single year, while John's gospel mentions three passovers, which would require at least two years. But John's story of the first passover reports the expulsion of the traders from the temple, which the other gospels assign to the last passover, and which John omits in his account of the last passover. This suggests that John's first passover story is a misplaced portion of his account of the last passover, and on this view of the matter John's gospel does not imply a ministry of even two years.

The matter is not certain or important enough to justify dogmatism on this subject, but a brief ministry would explain the astonishing brevity of the gospel story; for when duplicate and triplicate accounts in the fourfold narrative are omitted the story becomes very short indeed. Moreover a brief ministry partially explains the inability of the disciples to comprehend

their Master, their mistaken notions of the kingdom and their astonishment and confusion at his death.

A long ministry is inconsistent with the facts and implications of the accepted narratives. A brief ministry explains the doubt and confusion of the Jewish public concerning Jesus' real character and purpose. With plenty of time he could have made himself better understood by friends and foes alike; but he could not, in a few months, make himself understood by a people politically desperate and religiously fanatical, while popular longing for a military messiah and the great danger of another Zealot war conspired to drag him swiftly to his doom.

The end draws near. Only a few months ago, at the Jordan, Jesus consecrated himself, along with John the Baptist, to his prophetic task. Now John sleeps in a martyr's grave and Jesus proposes to meet his enemies in their strongest hold, to proclaim his message at the nation's capital, where he knows full well he is doomed to die.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE FINAL CONFLICT

The passover was now at hand and the approach of Jesus threatened, in the opinion of the Jewish rulers, to make it a season of unusual excitement and danger. His move down the Jordan at this time, attended by immense crowds from Galilee and Peraea, was an ominous matter. Hitherto he had practically confined his preaching to Galilee, but now he was going to force the issue between himself and his enemies at the capital.

Pilgrims were filling the city, and the people, knowing that Jesus was near, began to look for him. He became the chief theme of conversation. "What do you think?" they said, as they discussed the matter in the temple colonnade, for they knew the attitude of the rulers and appreciated his danger; "do you think that he will not come to the feast?"

While all were curious, some hoping and some fearing that he would venture into the city, the priests and scribes felt that his preaching there must by all means be prevented, that a man whose power was so great and purposes inscrutable should not have the freedom of the city. In spite of bitter issues between themselves, the common danger drew them together, and the Herodians joined them. They reasoned thus: If we leave him alone, he will captivate the crowds, and the assertion of his messiahship, if it should be made, will bring on a riot which the Romans will avenge with blood. They will deprive us of such freedom as we now enjoy in civil and religious affairs and our nation will be destroyed. Caiaphas, the high priest, insisted that it was vastly better to sacrifice one dangerous man than to let the nation perish on his account. Having agreed on this, they passed the

word around that any who knew of the presence of Jesus in the city should report the fact, that they might arrest him.

### *Launching The Campaign*

For awhile the disciples realized their increasing danger as they approached the city. They had protested against a recent visit to Bethany, saying, "Master, the Jews of late sought to stone you, and are you going there again?" and when he would not be dissuaded, Thomas had said, "Let us go and die with him."

But now Jesus made it clear that he was going to push his campaign into the capital. That martyrdom which had long seemed probable now grew certain. Here in Jerusalem, the very center of that orthodoxy which had finally become treason to the "law and the prophets," that orthodoxy which was now resisting the real sway of God in the nation, here more than anywhere else was there need of that truth which he came to proclaim. It was better to die here than to retreat into the wilderness or go back to Galilee. Why should he longer hesitate to declare his message here, where for a thousand years all great questions had gotten their final answer, and where the fate of Israel must now be decided? Here where so many prophets had died, and dying, had breathed into the nation their own immortal spirit, he would declare God's latest word to Israel, and welcome, if it must be so, a prophet's fate.

His chief care now was, not to save his life, but to make his last days count as mightily as possible for that cause on which he was staking everything, and on which he believed the nation's destiny depended. He is not going to enter the city secretly, or, on the other hand, allow himself to be seized at the moment of entrance and hurried away to death. He will push back for a few days the martyrdom prepared for him and make space for a little more work before he dies.

He will smite his enemies in the citadel of their power and make one last appeal to the nation.

*Jesus Enters Jerusalem*

His power over the common people reasserts itself as he approaches the city. His miracles and preaching draw the people to him in a constantly increasing host who become more enthusiastic as they near the Holy City. As the multitudes going to meet him join the multitude of pilgrims, his progress to the city gate becomes a grand ovation. Some, in transports of enthusiasm, spread their garments in his path, while a multitude of voices cry, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the kingdom that cometh! The kingdom of our father David! Hosannah to the Son of David! Blessed is the King that cometh in the name of the Lord!"

If Jesus had come into the city secretly he would have been discovered and seized while unprotected by a friendly multitude and before he had opportunity to deliver his message. He foiled the plans of his enemies, rallied his friends and made a chance for himself by a very public entrance, but was now, as on many other occasions, compromised by the zeal and indiscretion of his friends. In his own words or behavior there was no suggestion of royalty, nothing that could have political significance. His steed was not the war horse, but the humble ass, the native burden beast most intimately associated with simple life and patient toil through all their generations. But the friends who acclaimed him as "the Son of David" and as "King," played directly into the hands of his foes.

He had probably some friends among the Pharisees, though most were hostile, and we may not be sure whether it was friendly concern or angry alarm which moved certain Pharisees to protest against these expressions which implied messiahship. "Rabbi," they

said, "restrain your disciples." "I tell you," he replied, "if these were to keep still the very stones would shout." This he said, not to justify the disastrous indiscretion of his friends, but to signify his utter despair of being understood or of controlling the situation. He recognized his destiny and realized that his friends as well as his enemies were forcing him to it.

### *Weeping Over The City*

As he descended the Mount of Olives the Holy City lay before him in all its beauty and magnificence. Even in the days of Solomon it had been less splendid than it had become through the pride and resources of Herod the Great. Upon high ground overlooking the surrounding valleys stood the massive city walls, and upon the nearest of the two principal heights of the city stood the temple in its splendor. It was the pride and sanctuary of the nation, and toward it the face of the devout Jew in every land was daily turned in prayer. Hateful to every citizen as a token of their servitude to pagan Rome was the castle of Antonia which frowned beside the temple wall. Here were garrisoned the Roman soldiers who held the city in subjection. Upon a loftier height stood the palace of Herod, rivaling, if it did not even excel the temple in its imposing grandeur. This height was the center of the old city of David, and not far from Herod's palace was the tomb of the poet warrior and king. Below, there in the valley and upon the terraced hill sides, were the shops, the markets and the homes of the people.

The happy tumult about Jesus did not make him forgetful of Jerusalem's strategic place in history, or unsensitive to its moral and spiritual meaning. This superb expression of Israel's civic life and religious faith spoke to him of her guilt as well as her glory. He was deeply moved, and his tears flowed while he poured out the burden of his heart: "Would that you,

too, knew, even today, on what your peace depends! But it is hidden from you. A time is coming when your enemies will throw ramparts around you and besiege you on every side and raze you and your children to the ground—all because you would not recognize God's call and purpose."

### *His Enemies Discouraged*

As the procession slowly drifted down the western slope of the Mount of Olives the inhabitants of Jerusalem, on the walls and housetops and from the higher city streets, watched the waving of palm branches and listened to the shouting of the people. The procession moved across the valley of the Kidron and up through one of the city gates into the crowded streets and on to the temple.

The city was shaken with tremendous excitement. The oldest inhabitant had never witnessed such excitement in times of peace. Hours passed before the crush of people in the streets and in the temple place was released and the tumult subsided, and they were hours of deep suspense to the Jewish rulers.

Great was the exultation of Jesus' followers and terrible the chagrin and dismay of his enemies. The latter, after planning so carefully for his arrest, had been overwhelmed by the audacity of his movement. It had been practically impossible to arrest him, and no officer now would dare to lay hands upon him. Rioting would have followed any attempt to seize the people's prophet. His enemies, when they met for counsel at the close of the day, said one to another, "You see, nothing can be done. The world has gone after him."

And, for the moment, nothing could be done but to wait and counteract his influence by every possible means, and trust that some pretext for arresting him might arise, or that a secret opportunity of putting him out of the way might yet be found.

Jesus perfectly understood the situation and made the most of his opportunity. If any act of disrespect for constituted authority had been committed in connection with the innocent and happy tumult which attended his entrance into the city, it might have been easy to represent the affair as an act of treason or insurrection. But nothing of the kind happened. He simply went into the temple area, conversed awhile with his friends and observed what was going on, and wisely controlled until the morrow his indignation at the rapacity of the temple merchants. As evening came on he retired in the company of his disciples to Bethany, on the further slope of the Mount of Olives.

### *Rebuking The Temple Traffic*

The next morning, with his apostles around him, he entered the city and went to the temple. As usual, the money changers and the traffickers in sacrificial animals were there doing business, and their business made a reverent and meditative worship almost impossible. The extortion practiced upon the people in the exchange of money and the sale of birds and animals exasperated the pilgrims, while loud and sometimes angry voices increased the confusion due to bleating lambs and lowing cattle. That noisy and greedy barter should occupy the place which should be trodden reverently and in holy meditation was a burning shame, and that it was done with the sanction of the priests who had a financial interest in this unholy monopoly made it all the more intolerable. The anger of Jesus flamed out against it, and he paid his respect to those responsible for it in language which stung the priests to the quick and intensified while it expressed the indignation of the crowd.

He ordered them to take their property away, and probably had the help of others while he proceeded to drive out the sheep and cattle. The merchants seem



to have offered no resistance, but in the confused movement of men and animals the counters of the money changers were overturned and their money spilled upon the ground. "Take these things away," he said; "Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise! It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations,' but you have made it a den of thieves."

Overawed by his authoritative words and manner and by the sentiments of the crowd, the traders submitted temporarily to this purgation of the temple grounds. The priests, who were the most guilty parties in this matter, were most deeply offended, but could not expect the sympathy of the Pharisees, whose general attitude toward them was unfriendly. Nor, considering the temper of the crowd, would it be wise to invoke force for the immediate restoration of their business. The peril of a disturbance which might attract the attention of their Roman masters made it unsafe to resent with force the indignity they had suffered.

Jesus then proceeded to address the people. Never before had the time and place called for such urgent speech. Knowing that his time was short, he made the most of it. One of the parables which he seems to have spoken at this time was that of the barren fig tree, whose owner determined to destroy it unless his gardener could make it bear fruit the coming year; and by this he signified the fate of the nation if it did not soon bear fruit in righteousness.

Such preaching, after his attack on the temple traffic, added exasperation to the alarm which the priests felt as they realized his grip on the masses of the people. It was hard to endure the praise of him which they were compelled to hear, and to witness the amusement of the people and hear their derisive laughter when Jesus stung his enemies by a keen retort, or smote them with a pithy maxim or blistered them with a pat epithet. Permeating all other emotions was a

lurking fear that his growing popularity might yet embolden him to claim messiahship.

Then, too, there were unpleasant echoes of yesterday's pageant and of what the rulers deemed its sinister meaning, when little boys circulated through the crowds repeating yesterday's shout of "Hosannah to the Son of David!" This aftermath of yesterday's ovation to the prophet was due to the imitativeness of children who had not yet gotten over the excitement of the previous day; but their behavior touched the sensibilities of the priests most unpleasantly, for these words were still the sentiment of thousands, and those who had been willing to turn the nation's place of prayer into a cattle market were shocked that little boys should run about hurrahing for Jesus. The specially obnoxious note in their acclaim was in the words "Son of David;" for this implied messiahship. "Do you hear what these are saying?" they angrily demanded of Jesus. His wit never wanted matter for reply, and he answered, as usual, with a passage of scripture: "Did you never read, 'Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast brought praise to perfection'?"

As night drew near he returned to Bethany. It had been a day of hard work for him and a day of excitement and worry for his enemies. He had struck them telling blows and they were more enraged than ever; but they could not see how to get rid of him, because he had the sympathy of the multitude. They feared and hated him, but dared not touch him.

### *The Last Day's Work*

The next day, Tuesday, according to our reckoning of time, Jesus returned to the temple for what appears to have been the last and most strenuous day in all his public ministry. One of the first things he met was a demand by the priests for his authority in interfering with their business at the temple. He parried

by asking them a question: "Was the baptism of John divinely authorized, or was it simply of human origin?" They were embarrassed; for to admit its divine authority involved acceptance of the gospel which he and John alike proclaimed, while to deny its divine authority would displease the multitude who regarded John as a prophet. When they answered that they did not know whether John's work was divinely authorized or not, he replied, in substance, "You have not given me a true answer, and I will not give you any at all."

He did not, however, let them off easily. He said, "Publicans and harlots enter God's kingdom more willingly than you do. They believed in John, and though you saw them entering into a better life through his influence, you would not repent and believe."

### *A Backslidden Nation*

He continued his attack by telling a parable of two sons, one of whom made a good promise which he did not keep, while the other, after refusing to work, repented and did as his father wished. He also pictured a Pharisee and publican at prayer, the former boastful and contemptuous of the publican, whose humility and penitence won the forgiveness of God. Thus he disparaged a respectable and impenitent orthodoxy, while commending the disreputables who heed the divine call.

His parable of the wicked husbandmen who abused the servants and finally killed the son of the master, pointed to the nation's guilt and peril in rejecting the messengers of God, and his parable of the wedding banquet, where common people from highways and alleys finally took the places of those who had refused to come, revealed the plight of those who were now refusing the divine invitation. If they had any doubt about his meaning, he made the matter clear by adding, "I tell you, the kingdom of God shall be taken away from you," meaning that they were forfeiting the favor and inviting the punishment of heaven.

*Worsting His Foes*

He was now coming to grips with the religious leaders as he had never done before, and they were furious as, in the presence of a sympathetic crowd, with keen retort and telling parable, he dealt blow after blow on their proud heads. It is significant of the peril of Jesus that the political partisans of Herod now appear upon the scene. With the Pharisees, they approach him on the subject of loyalty to the Roman government, and ask whether it is right to pay taxes to Caesar. If he answers "Yes," he will offend many Pharisees and Zealots who hold that such tribute is inconsistent with loyalty to Jehovah, their only real King; but if he says "No," they can take his damaging statement to the Roman authorities, and his arrest will follow. They were asking a question which they probably would not themselves have wished to answer. Jesus inquired whose image and superscription were on the tribute money, and they replied, "Caesar's." Then he said, "Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and to God what belongs to God." He had sprung the trap they set for him, but was not caught; for he announced a principle which implied both civil and religious obligation. They retreated in surprise and discomfiture from his presence.

The Sadducees, who deny the future life of the soul, came to him with a question about matrimony in the next life. Reminding him of the law which requires a man to marry the widow of his deceased brother, they tell him of seven brothers who had in succession the same woman for wife, and then ask whose wife she is to be in the next world. He replied that the institution of marriage does not exist in the next life, and then added, as proof of future life, that God had said to Moses, "I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob," adding "God is not the God of dead people, but of living. You are greatly mistaken."

It is not easy to imagine the tremendous excitement produced by the preaching of Jesus, or the rage and fear of his enemies. In every encounter his wit and wisdom increased the enthusiasm of the crowd for him, and the suspense of priests and scribes became more terrible as they observed his increasing power. The priests realized that he was undermining their prestige and breaking down that system of worship which the priesthood had been building and protecting for centuries, and the scribes, who might else have welcomed his aid in their fight for a better religion, were shocked and frightened at his defiance of their authority and traditions, his menace to the synagogue being no less serious than his menace to the temple. Moreover his recognition of the alien's claim to brotherhood as a member of the divine family was, from their point of view, intolerable and scandalous, jeopardizing every interest of patriotism and religion.

### *Jesus Winning The Populace*

Hitherto the Jewish leaders had stood like a solid wall between Jesus and a multitude who felt the attractive power of his wonderful personality. But now it was becoming doubtful whether that wall would long resist the pressure of the people against it. Never before had he stayed at the capital and fought an open battle day after day like one determined to conquer or die on the field. In addition to the multitude who openly manifested their allegiance to him, there was, as the rulers knew, another multitude who believed without having the courage to acknowledge their convictions, and they observed also that some of the scribes and Pharisees were yielding to his influence. They wondered how long it would be before orthodox authority would break down, and municipal tumult invite the bloody interference of the Romans.

In all history there is nothing more sublime than this last struggle of Jesus to save his nation from the

forces that were pushing it to destruction. He was bearding single handed at the center of its authority a powerful priesthood whose religion had been lost in greed, rationalism and political ambition. Here also he was having his last struggle with the Pharisees, who had won for themselves and the synagogue that prestige which the priests and the temple had lost, but who were substituting the trivialities of ritualism for the primary essentials of conduct, and whose orthodoxy left untouched those issues most vital to the moral and religious life of the nation. In what he suspected or intended would be the last day of his public ministry he was putting all his strength, all the power of passionate speech, into his work, was selling his life as dearly as possible.

### *Denouncing False Leaders*

Though from his point of view the scribes and Pharisees were nearer right than the priests and Sadducees, his invectives were aimed principally at the former, because they represented popular orthodoxy and had the conscience of the better class in their keeping. He bitterly denounced them to the people. "Beware of them," he said; "They talk but do not act. They lay heavy burdens on men's shoulders, but will not lift a finger to help carry them. What they do is done to catch the notice of men. They like to walk in long robes. In religious ostentation they wear broad phylacteries and large tassels on their garments, and want the best places at banquets and front seats in the synagogue. They wish to be saluted as "Rabbi" in the streets. They prey upon the property of widows and offer long empty prayers. All the more terrible will their condemnation be!"

The torrent of his speech flowed on: "Woe to you, scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut the kingdom of heaven against men. You will not go in yourselves, and you hinder those who would like to enter...

You compass sea and land to make one convert, and when you win him you make him twofold more a child of hell than yourselves. You tithe mint and dill and cummin, but omit the weightier matters of the law, justice, mercy and fidelity. . . Blind guides you are, swallowing the camel while you filter the gnat away. Woe to you, scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites! for you resemble whitewashed sepulchers, comely enough on the outside, but within full of bones and putrefaction. You seem to men just, but are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. . . You build tombs for prophets and monuments for the righteous, and say, 'If we had been living in the time of our fathers we would not have helped them spill the blood of the prophets. So you admit that you are the sons of those who murdered the prophets. Measure up, then, to the standard of your fathers. You serpents! You brood of vipers'"

It seems almost incredible that he should have become so fierce in his invective; but even then, as he contemplated the coming tragedy of judgment, that pity which is a phase of moral anger flowed from his heart in words of abysmal sorrow: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, slayer of prophets and stoner of divine messengers, how often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her brood under her wings! But you would not have it so! Behold, your house is abandoned to yourselves, deserted by Jehovah."

### *A Lost Nation*

They knew that the "house" to which he referred was the temple, and the scripture which he quoted cleared his statement of all ambiguity; for he was using the words with which Jeremiah had announced the penalty of disobedience. His better informed hearers may also have recalled those other words of divine warning: "Then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house which I have

hallowed for my name will I cast out of my sight, and Israel shall be a proverb and a by-word among all nations."

Though he had yet much to say to his more intimate disciples, these were apparently the last recorded words of his public ministry, and they removed all doubt concerning his attitude toward the national religion as embodied in the temple and the official priesthood. He felt that the nation had fallen away from God, and that the scribes and Pharisees who dominated the synagogues were practically false in the most vital matters, that the capital of the nation was only waiting for a great judgment in which God would wipe the temple "out of his sight," while razing the city to the ground and completing the ruin of the nation.

The breach between himself and the religious leaders was now a yawning chasm, and they felt that his speedy arrest and death were necessary to avert tragic results to themselves and the city.

As for Jesus, whether so purposing or not, he had made his last appeal and flung his last warning into the ears of his frightened adversaries. He had deliberately spoken the words which made his death inevitable.

Turning his back on that temple which he believed God to have deserted already, and purposing, it may be, never to return, he left the city, having concluded the most strenuous and exciting day of all his public life.

With his apostles and most intimate friends around him he crossed the valley and began the ascent of the Mount of Olives. Tempted by weariness and by affection for the city where he had ceased to work and had yet to suffer, he turned, and sitting down with his disciples, contemplated the glory that was soon to pass away. When his disciples commented on the massiveness of the temple walls, he replied that it was already devoted to a destruction so complete that one stone would not be left upon another.



*The End Of The Age*

This reminded them of that divine judgment which current opinion associated with "the end of the age" and "the coming of the Son of Man" pictured in the book of Daniel; and understanding that divine vengeance would then fall on Jerusalem, they inquired when these things would be and by what signs they might be foreknown.

His answer to their question is commonly known as the "Sermon on the Mount of Olives," and this discourse has been for centuries a battle ground of theologians concerning the coming of Christ in judgment at "the end of the world."

The perplexity of those who read this discourse is largely due, no doubt, to an imperfect record. The imperfection of the record is partly due to the errant memory and judgment of those who put the apostolic tradition into writing many years later, and partly to subsequent comments and interpolations which finally became a part of the text in the gospel story.

It is evident that the disciples were not asking about "the end of the world," and Jesus was not talking about that, these words being a mistranslation of words which mean "the end of the age," that is, the end of one age or dispensation of history and the beginning of another.

It is obvious also that his words were not intended to chart the history of ages for the benefit of far off generations, but to guide his disciples through a perplexing time. Looking into the faces of these men as they sit before him, he warns them by parable after parable to watch and be on guard against deception or surprise, solemnly declaring, "This generation shall not pass away until all these things shall be accomplished." It is perfectly clear from subsequent sermons and letters of apostles that they understood him to say that the entire program of calamity and judgment described by Jesus would be completed in the

near future. The words, "This generation shall not pass until all these things be accomplished" leave no room for the still unfinished centuries of human history and for the scenic and cosmic events of the Jewish and later Christian apocalypses, and these events probably had no place in his prophecy on this occasion.

### *The Nation's Doom*

Jesus assured his disciples that great tribulations were awaiting them, that they would be despised on his account, that even their relatives would conspire against them, that they would be expelled from synagogues and dragged before magistrates, and that in these persecutions some would fall away from the faith and some would be put to death.

But these persecutions would be only one feature of the general distress. The whole nation was coming into tribulation. There would be wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, and false christs and lying prophets would add to the general confusion. Through all this perplexity and pain the nation would move on to utter ruin. The approach of armies for the capture of Jerusalem would be to his disciples a signal for flight from the city, for there was coming to the nation and its capital such tribulation as was never known before and would not be again.

"When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies," he said, "be sure that her desolation is not far away. Then let those who are in Judea fly to the hills; let those who are in the city escape, and let not those who are in the country come back into the city, for these are the days of divine vengeance, in fulfillment of all that is written in scripture. Woe to women who are pregnant and to those who suckle children in those days, for sore anguish will come upon the land and wrath upon this people. They will fall by the edge of the sword, they will be carried prisoners to all nations, and Jerusalem will be under the heel of the gentiles until the period of the gentiles expires."

Then while twilight faded on the hills of Judah and shadows deepened in the valleys of Hinnom and Jehoshaphat, Jesus arose and led his disciples over the crown of the Mount of Olives to Bethany, where friends afforded him hospitality during these eventful days.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS

Why Jesus brought his ministry abruptly to a close when he might, apparently, have continued it a few days longer in defiance of temple and synagogue authorities, is an interesting question. He may have felt the necessity of fortifying the chosen twelve for the approaching crisis by a temporary retreat to some quiet place, where he might also obtain for himself the rest made necessary by the strenuous labor of the last few days, a rest all the more necessary on account of the terrible ordeal now so near at hand.

One can hardly help suspecting that he felt it practically impossible or useless to go on. He was failing even while he succeeded. The very success of his appeal in Jerusalem was in a certain way increasing his embarrassment. It added to his following an increasing host of people who could not be torn away from their materialistic notions of the kingdom and its Messiah. Possibly he felt that the excitement and indiscretion of his friends and the desperate fear and purpose of his enemies were reaching the point at which a riot might be precipitated about his person.

There had been a day when the enthusiastic multitudes in Galilee had felt inclined to take matters into their own hands, and in spite of his reluctance, to recognize him as king, and thus initiate the independence movement which they felt sure was a feature of the messianic program. He had averted that peril by hurrying his disciples into their boats and sending them away, while he escaped into the solitude of the hills beyond the sea. The desertion of those whom he thus disappointed gave his enemies a better chance to organize their opposition to him, which they did with the help of influential delegations from Jerusalem, and

finally. when they had succeeded in arousing the fear and suspicion of Herod, it became necessary to discontinue his work in the north.

Malcontents from every section of the country were now gathered at Jerusalem waiting for the great patriotic feast of the nation. If he went on preaching about the brotherhood and justice of the kingdom of God, condemning orthodox aristocrats and exploiters of the people, how long could he keep his own disciples from openly acclaiming him as Messiah, in a sense which would be false to himself, and dangerous to the peace of the city? An overt movement at the Capital, such as he had headed off in Galilee, would be unspeakably disastrous. What was the use of going on? His movement was going perilously astray in spite of him, and if he went on with his work the result might yet justify the fear of his adversaries. It is quite possible, therefore, if not probable, that he left the temple Tuesday, intending never to return.

### *Suspense Of His Enemies*

But these days of retirement were days of terrible suspense to the Jewish leaders. His unexplained absence from the city afforded no great relief, because they could not know what he was planning to do next. When would he come again, how would he come and what would happen when he did come? He had turned his back on the temple, declaring it to be forsaken of God. He evidently regarded the rulers as hopelessly fallen and apostate, and there was something ominous to the cult of both temple and synagogue in the mood of the people who had been listening to him.

Well, was he getting ready to come back and publicly assume the role of messiah king, for which he had so well prepared the way? If he did this, when would he do it? Would it not probably be on the supreme day of the feast, their great independence day, day which commemorated their deliverance from bondage in

Egypt? Would not every thing be ripe for a grand *coup d'etat* on Friday morning, after the great supper had been eaten, when religious and patriotic enthusiasm ran to highest pitch? What, so they reasoned, could this pretender need that had not already been done to smooth his way to that throne which his secret ambition claimed, that throne which the fanaticism of the people was ready to offer him? And if he claimed to be Messiah and asked for a throne, how soon would it and he be swept away in a torrent of the people's blood? Under these circumstances it seemed almost like a crime to give him Friday's chance.

What then could be done? He must be disposed of, and be disposed of before he had a chance to begin his work Friday morning. It would be better to find and seize him outside the city than to attempt his arrest in the city with crowds around him. It would be best to take him in the night and practically finish his examination before morning, and get him into the hands of the Romans and secure his condemnation and crucifixion before the passover pilgrims fairly knew what was going on. To have this pretender crucified on Friday morning, if it could not be done sooner, would so surprise and shock his votaries that they probably would not lift a hand to save him, and the crisis would pass without riot.

### *Judas The Traitor*

In this crisis Judas deserted Jesus and betrayed him. Though purse bearer in the apostolic company, he was not happy, and was even suspected of dishonesty. He alone, of the apostolic band, was not a Galilean, being a native of Kerioth, a town of Judea. Now he was back in his own country, in touch with relatives and old neighbors, feeling afresh those native prejudices and orthodox impressions which had lost their grip on him while in Galilee under the influence of Jesus. Being a Judean, he was more sensitive than any other

apostle to the scorn of his southern countrymen, and more accessible to plotters seeking help from the inside of Jesus' movement.

Things were not turning out in Jerusalem as the disciples had anticipated, and Judas, in closer touch with the enemies of the Master, was thoroughly disheartened. There seemed now little to hope for and much to fear. The rulers were practically certain to get the Master, as he had predicted, and what they would do to his leading disciples could only be guessed. His own danger was outstanding, because, being a Judean, he had less excuse than others for being in this Galilean movement which threatened the peace and safety of the whole country. He saw one way to save himself from the impending disaster, and finally, unmanned by suspense and fear, by prolonged excitement and insomnia, he came to that decision which was destined a few hours later to turn his whole soul into a hell of suicidal remorse. He presented himself to the priests, acknowledged himself a disillusioned follower of Jesus, gave them the information they desired, and entered into the plans of the temple police for the seizure of the prophet.

### *The Last Supper*

In the course of the day Thursday arrangements were made for Jesus and his apostles to eat the pass-over supper at the house of a friend. It could be eaten any time between sunset and midnight, and it may have been in the dusk of the evening that they made their way into the city and to the appointed place. Though they occupied the guest room in a friend's house, no servant had been appointed to wash the feet of the guests, and Jesus proceeded to perform that task himself. Possibly he was moved thereto by some rivalry among his disciples for places of honor at the feast. When Jesus approached Peter with the basin and towel, Peter objected, saying, "Master! You to wash my feet!"

"Just now," said Jesus, "you do not understand what I am doing, but you will sometime know."

"You will never wash my feet! Never!" said Peter. "Then," replied Jesus, "you will never share my lot."

Yielding to the Master's will, Peter, in a sudden flow of passionate affection, exclaimed, "Master, not my feet only, but my hands and my head!"

Having washed their feet, Jesus said, "If I, whom you call Master, wash your feet, you should be willing thus to serve one another. I have been setting you an example."

As they proceeded with their meal, he said, "One of you will betray me." They looked at one another in astonishment, and then said, one after another, "Master, is it I?"

"One of the twelve dipping with me in this very dish," said Jesus.

Peter signaled John, who reclined next to Jesus, that he should ascertain who the betrayer was, and John requested the information. Jesus whispered to John, "It is the one to whom I shall give this piece of bread when I have dipped it." Then he accommodated Judas with another piece of bread, after dipping it in the broth.

This act had no special significance for any member of the company but John, unless it was Judas, who may have wondered whether it was the Master's look or his own guilty conscience that made him feel himself suspected.

Judas soon finished his supper and departed, and the disciples supposed him to be about some business connected with his office for all of them when Jesus said to him, "Be quick with what you have to do."

The shadow of the cross now rested heavily upon the soul of Jesus, and he said, "I have longed earnestly to eat this passover with you before I suffer."

Thinking how he might give new meaning to the passover meal and, perhaps, make all future meals a memorial of himself, he said, as he handed pieces of



the broken loaf to one after another, "This is my body which is given for you." And as the wine cup passed from his hand he said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. When you eat and drink hereafter remember me. The bread and wine proclaim my death."

The awful events which followed so closely made his meaning still more clear, and as long as they lived their meals reminded them of the sorrow of their Master on this occasion and of his terrible death soon after.

### *His Final Discourse*

The story of this supper, as given by John, reports a wonderfully beautiful discourse by Jesus to his disciples. "I do not call you servants," he said, "for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I call you friends because I have taken you into my confidence, reporting to you what my Father reveals to me. You are my friends, if you do what I tell you to do. If the world hates you, remember that it hated me first. As they persecute me, they will persecute you. They will turn you out of the synagogues and even think they are doing service to God when they kill you. Before I leave you I have another commandment to give you, that you love one another as I have loved you. You will be recognized as my disciples, if you so love one another. I am going to leave you now, but I will not leave you helpless. There is a Helper whom you can not have till I am gone, the Spirit of truth, who will be God's revealer, helper and comforter to you. He will give you strength and understanding. So I will give you peace in a troubled world, but not as the world gives peace. Be not disquieted or afraid. I have overcome the world, and so, through the Spirit's help, may you. Let not your heart be troubled. Believe in God. Believe also in me. In my Father's house are many abodes. If it were not so, I would have told you. I am going to prepare

a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there you may be also."

After these words of guidance and comfort he prayed earnestly that his disciples might be kept from the evil of the world, and finally be with him to see and share his glory.

### *Prayerful Waiting*

A hymn concluded the supper and they left the room and departed from the city. Leaving the road which ascends the Mount of Olives, they turned aside to a secluded place among the trees where, during the last few days, they had often resorted for privacy and prayer.

Here Jesus requested his disciples to watch and wait while he went off by himself to pray. Two or three of the disciples followed him for a little way, as they were accustomed to do on such occasions. He was now deeply distressed and asked them to watch and pray.

A little later they saw him prostrate on the ground, earnestly praying, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me!"

The hour had come when his work was done, and when, with nerves frayed out by excessive labor and long excitement he waited the ordeal of shame and death.

When the lamp's oil is spent the bright flame turns to smoky red and the wick itself perishes in the flame it has been feeding; and sometimes in human life the radiant flame of zeal and courage becomes to spent nerves a torturing fire of doubt and fear.

Jesus saw no escape from death on a charge which set him before his nation in a false light and put the stamp of meanness and dishonor on his public ministry, namely, that of aiming at kingship and fomenting treason to Rome. A false logic of the situation

pointed to death on the cross, not for truth and righteousness, but for mean ambition and for treason.

### *The Inevitable Cross*

He knew something about death on the cross. Within his lifetime, in connection with one insurrection, Rome had crucified two thousand Jews along the highways of Israel, so that everybody might see them and know the danger of treason. Jesus himself may have seen some of these victims, and he had certainly heard enough of their sufferings as they hung by the roadside, nailed to crosses so low that men might come and talk with them face to face, as through long days and nights they slowly expired.

But Jesus shrank from the shame awaiting him more than he did from the physical pain. A man familiar with courts and jails and executions may become so used to these things that he can not feel the fine horror which another man would feel at being convicted of crime and punished as a malefactor. But Jesus, whose early life had been with birds and flowers and trees, with huts and villages of humble people, with the simple townsmen and rustic peasants of the Galilean highlands, was stung with anguish at the false position into which he was being thrust, and regarded with horror the ignominy awaiting him.

The tragedy of it was that the coming event tended to belie his whole mission. Believing, as he did, that his nation was to perish utterly in a war with Rome, and having done his utmost to avert that war by a moral and religious revival of the nation, he was now to be executed on a charge of treason, as one plotting another rebel war against the empire. This final scene in his life drama would be a public, historic and final misinterpretation of all he had said and done, and put him in the category of those political adventurers who had already caused so much bloodshed in Israel.

He might even welcome all that was coming to him

if he could thereby save the nation from its doom; but his effort to save the nation had failed. Had his patriotism been a less powerful passion, he could have surrendered himself to shame and death more easily; but now that nation whose practical apostasy from God was a burning and intolerable shame to his patriotic soul, was drifting none the less swiftly to its terrible fate .

*"Thy Will Be Done"*

Amazed to find his strength so spent and his soul so shaken when the most terrible ordeal of his life was just before him, he prayed earnestly that, if it were possible, he might be spared the trial, that the shame and suffering might be averted. But even now, while submitting himself to that which he seemed unable to bear, he received strength. "My father," he said, "all things are possible to Thee. If it be thy will, take this cup from me; but if not, thy will be done."

Prompted by that craving for human sympathy which often drives a great and lonely soul to its inferior fellows, he had repeatedly approached his disciples, only to find them sleeping. Once he had said, "What! could you not watch with me one hour?" Then, cutting remonstrance short, he excused them, saying, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Finally, seeing how impossible it was for them to keep awake, he said, "Sleep on now and take your rest."

At last, having fully accepted for himself the bitter cup and the fiery baptism, he heard, as he looked on his sleeping disciples, the sound of those whom Judas was leading through the dark.

"The hour is come," he said. "I am betrayed! See! The betrayer is here. Rise. Let us be going."

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE TRIAL AND CRUCIFIXION

As Jesus led his disciples back toward the highway he met the temple police and a crowd which had been gathered up at the religious headquarters of the city. Judas was guiding them. They came armed with swords, clubs and heavy walking sticks. Judas made good his promise to identify Jesus by going straight up to him, greeting him as "Rabbi," and kissing him.

As Jesus had protected the traitor from the wrath of his companions at the last supper by not naming him, so now he protected him, saying softly to Judas, whose arm was still about him, "Do you betray me with a kiss?"

As they were taking Jesus into custody Peter drew sword and began to fight; but the crowd rushed forward with a flourish of weapons and the disciples fled.

Jesus said, "Have you come out against me as against a robber, with swords and clubs? I was with you daily in the temple and you did not lift a hand against me," thus reminding them of the mob-like character of their attack upon him.

They conducted him with all speed and as quietly as possible to the headquarters of the priests, taking him first to Annas. This man was one of the most astute politicians in Jerusalem, being the real head of the priestly party. They went to him first because of his practical leadership in the movement against Jesus.

#### *Jesus Before Annas*

Believing that Jesus held secret and dangerous intentions, Annas questioned him about his doctrine and disciples. He hoped to unearth a dangerous conspiracy; but Jesus insisted that from the beginning he

had been a public teacher, openly declaring his full doctrine of the kingdom. "Why?" he said, "do you ask me such questions? If you want to know what my doctrines are, ask those who have been hearing me. They know what my teaching is."

An attendant slapped Jesus on the mouth, saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest?" "If I have spoken untruly," replied Jesus, "bear witness to it; but if not, why this blow?"

After a vain effort to convict Jesus of evil intentions, Annas ordered him taken to the high priest.

### *Peter and Judas*

As he was being led through the courtyard he saw Peter, who, with some unnamed disciple, commonly supposed to have been John, but more likely Judas, had followed Jesus and the crowd into the priest's palace. This companion, who was acquainted there, had procured admission for Peter also. The disciple most likely to have been acquainted at the palace was Judas, who was born in Judea and brought up near Jerusalem, and who had been, as we know, plotting with the priests against Jesus. He did know the high priest. If he had not known him before, he knew him now as a result of his bad business with the priests, and he had also become acquainted with some of the servants about the place. He could safely follow Jesus into the palace, and Peter had the courage to go with him.

Leaving Peter in the courtyard, Judas could safely go on into the room where the priests were examining their prisoner. He thus had a chance to watch the Master, after his arrest, to hear the fatal admission of Jesus that he was the Christ, and the unanimous declaration of his enemies that he was guilty of blasphemy and treason and worthy of death. He realized then that there was no escape for Jesus. He probably witnessed also the abuse heaped upon Jesus while they

waited for morning and the trial before Pilate. We need not wonder, therefore, that remorse overtook Judas even before Jesus appeared before the governor.

### *Peter Denies Jesus*

While Peter warmed himself beside the court-yard fire some one accused him of being one of Jesus' disciples, and Peter promptly denied it. After awhile the accusation was repeated and most emphatically denied. Finally the matter came up again, and they said to Peter, "You really are one of them; you were with the Nazarene, and your speech shows that you are a Galilean." Thoroughly terrified now, Peter solemnly swore that he did not even know the man they were talking about.

As they were taking Jesus through the courtyard on the way to Caiaphas, his glance fell on Peter, and Peter never forgot that pitying and sorrowful look. Leaving the fellows around the fire, he went out, and burning with remorse in the cold starlight, wept bitterly.

### *Jesus Before Caiaphas*

Caiaphas tried, as Annas had done, to convict Jesus of blasphemous teaching and treasonable intentions. The first would make him worthy of death according to Jewish law, and the second would furnish ground for a death sentence by Pilate. It was practically impossible to make out a case against him, for although he had said many things tending to undermine the respect of the people for the Jewish rulers, his denunciations of them would not serve their present purpose as matters of complaint before Pilate.

Having failed to make out a case against him, Caiaphas finally played the card which Judas had put into his hand. Having learned that Jesus really considered himself the Messiah, he put the question to

him directly. "I demand," he said, "That you tell us solemnly, in the name of the living God, whether you are the Christ." Jesus replied, "I am."

### *Waiting For Morning*

Having gotten from his own lips what they had vainly tried to get from others, they all declared that he was worthy of death, and felt sure that Pilate would not dare to ignore the charge of treason which they would bring against him. There was nothing to do now but wait for daylight and prepare for a formal and legal assembly of the Sanhedrin in the morning and an appeal to Pilate as soon thereafter as possible, for all the action thus far taken against Jesus was in no sense a real trial; it was simply an investigation by a mob of dignitaries who had made themselves into a committee of public safety for the purpose of seizing Jesus and bringing him to trial.

While waiting and maturing their plans, a brutal crowd amused themselves by abusing the prisoner in the courtyard. He had no protectors there, and they felt at liberty to torment one who had been found worthy of death. To insulting language they added the indignity of spitting into his face. Remembering that many believed him a prophet, they blindfolded him and slapped him in the face, saying, "Prophecy unto us, you Christ; tell us who struck you."

It required little time in the morning to ratify formally in the Sanhedrin the conclusion to which they had arrived informally during the night, and having prepared their case against him, they took him to the governor.

### *The Remorse of Judas*

Before they were fairly on their way to the Praetorium Judas thrust himself into their presence. He now realized with shame and horror what he had done.



All the resentment he had felt toward other members of the apostolic band, all the faults he had seen or thought he saw in Jesus and all the fears he had felt for himself were now lost in self-loathing. Nothing could ever quench the fires of remorse now burning in his soul.

"I have done wrong," he exclaimed; "I have betrayed the innocent!" They replied, "What do we care for that? That is your affair, not ours."

If Judas had hoped, even vaguely, that he might yet serve the Master whom he had betrayed, the contempt of the priests disillusioned him. He flung at their feet the money they had paid him for his meanness and departed. If he followed on to the Praetorium, it was in the desperate hope that Pilate might balk the deadly purpose of the priests. It is difficult to believe that he permitted himself to witness the crucifixion, or that the self-contempt which drove him to suicide permitted him to outlive the Master.

### *Jesus Before Pilate*

It was quite early in the morning when they brought Jesus to Pilate. As the career of Jesus had been almost wholly outside of Pilate's jurisdiction, the excitement of the people over him may have escaped the governor's attention almost wholly until the last few days. He was sitting now on a platform raised in front of the Praetorium, for the accommodation of the Jews, whose religious ritual during the passover season would not allow them to go inside. He now saw Jesus, probably for the first time, as he was conducted up the stairs into his presence.

When he inquired what accusation they brought against their prisoner, their spokesman, probably Caiaphas, replied that they would not have troubled him at all if this man had not been a very dangerous criminal. Pilate, suspecting that the offense of Jesus was some matter of religious teaching or conduct, of

no account whatever from the standpoint of Roman law, realizing how dangerous it was to cross the prejudices of the Jews, told them to take their prisoner and judge him according to their own law. They replied that this was impossible, because the man deserved to die, and Roman law would not allow them so to punish him. They went on, saying, "We found this fellow perverting our nation, claiming to be our king and forbidding the payment of taxes to the empire."

This was a very serious accusation, and Pilate appealed to Jesus, saying, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus replied, "Why do you ask me this? Of your own accord, because you wish to know? Or have others told you that I claim to be a king?"

### *The Kingdom Of Jesus*

With some irritation, Pilate exclaimed, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the high priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?"

In that lofty sense of the mystic and the prophet, Jesus answered, "My kingdom does not belong to this world. If it did, my subjects would have fought to keep me out of the hands of my enemies. Mine is not an earthly kingdom. No, it is something else."

"But then you are a king? You!" rejoined Pilate. Looking calmly into the face of his earthly judge and answering for his life, touched by that prophetic sense which made him consciously the child and voice of heaven, he does not think it necessary to abate his claim to sovereignty in the realm of truth and noble souls. "Certainly," he said, "I was born for that. I came into the world to bear testimony to the truth. Those who belong to the truth recognize my authority."

"Truth!" exclaimed Pilate; "What is truth?" Mystified as he was by this strange man and his enigmatical speech, he realized the discrepancy between the claims he really made for himself and the claims which his

enemies alleged that he was making; but his inclination to acquit the prisoner only drove his enemies to greater vehemence of accusation.

Realizing the futility of further words, Jesus lapsed into silence. Pilate said, "Have you no answer to all this? See how many things they accuse you of." But Jesus held his tongue while his enemies talked on.

Pilate could not believe that this patient, self-possessed man claimed to be a king, in any dangerous sense of that word. He said to the priests, "I can not find anything criminal in him;" but they continued their denunciations, saying, "He began in Galilee, and has been teaching all the way to this place, and now he is here, stirring up the people throughout all Judea."

At the mention of Galilee, Pilate thought he saw a way out of his difficulty. Being assured that the prisoner was a Galilean, and knowing that Herod Antipas, ruler of that province, was now in the city, he ordered the prisoner taken to him.

### *Jesus Before Herod*

Herod was glad to see this man he had heard so much about, and listened with interest to the charges against him; and as the accusers were now talking to one who had Jewish blood in his veins and understood their language, it was easier to make their grievance understood. Herod was glad to see the successor of John the Baptist, but he soon realized that however absurd or impracticable his teachings might be, he had not said or done anything worthy of death, and he did not care to have the blood of another prophet on his hands.

Realizing the impotence of any defense he might put up against the storm of lies now assailing him, Jesus made no reply to their accusations, and when Herod proceeded to question him, all he got from his prisoner was the uncondescending dignity of silence. Piqued by Jesus' taciturnity and wishing to please the

Jewish dignitaries, he joined them in ridiculing the messiahship of Jesus, and sent them back to Pilate.

### *Again Before Pilate*

Pilate was not glad to see them coming back with their prisoner, followed by a crowd grown larger than before. He said, "You have brought this man to me on the charge of inciting the people to rebellion. I have examined him in your presence and do not find him guilty. Neither did Herod, to whom I had you take him, for he has sent him back. You see, he has not done anything worthy of death, so I am going to whip him and let him go."

A storm of protests greeted this announcement. As a compliment to the Jews Pilate had, at previous pass-over seasons, gratified them by releasing some prisoner whom they might select, and hoping that Jesus might have many friends in the crowd, he now proposed to release Jesus; but they seized the opportunity of clamoring for the release of Barabbas. In disappointment Pilate exclaimed, "What then shall I do with Jesus, whom you call the Christ?" They shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him."

"Why?" said Pilate; what evil has he done?" Nothing but blood would quench the thirst of this crowd, which threatened to become a mob, and Pilate, fearing another riot, felt that he must yield. "I am not responsible," he said, "for the blood of this just man. You must answer for it." They accepted the responsibility, yelling back at him, "His blood be on us and our children."

### *Under The Scourge*

Pilate then delivered Jesus to the soldiers for the whipping which was often a preliminary of capital punishment. Having previously proposed to whip him and let him go, he still indulged the hope that this ter-

rible punishment would so far satisfy the Jews that they would not insist on his crucifixion. To soldiers, hardened by their man-killing profession and by the bloody sports of the arena, the torture of a criminal condemned to die afforded occasional and welcome relief from the monotony of garrison life, and they were quite willing to vent upon such a person the spite they felt toward that troublesome race whose bigotry made their presence here necessary.

Scourging was a terrible punishment. The victim was stripped of his clothing, that the several lashes of the dreadful whip, each armed with jagged pieces of bone or metal, might tear deeply into the flesh wherever it fell. The blows were given deliberately, that the full strength of an unwearied arm might be put into each blow, that the victim might somewhat recover from the shock of one blow before another fell and that the lashes might fall where they would produce the greatest distress. If the torturer were tempted by the agony of his victim to desist, he might reflect that to spare the criminal would be a doubtful mercy, since the less life left in him by the scourging the shorter would be his term of anguish on the cross, the shorter also would be the vigil of the soldiers who must see that his friends did not come to his relief.

Under the scourge victims often fainted and sometimes died through shock and loss of blood. Eusebius, the historian, in a letter to the church at Smyrna, has this to say about some Christian martyrs: "All around were horrified to see them, so torn with scourges that their very veins were laid bare, the inner muscles and sinews, even the very bowels, exposed."

Having punished Jesus with the scourge, the soldiers proceeded to mock those royal pretensions which they understood to be the ground of his condemnation. One twisted thorn twigs into a mock laurel wreath and forced it down upon his brow. They threw a soldier's scarlet cloak over his shoulders to suggest the imperial purple and completed their burlesque by putting a

reed into his hand for a scepter, and bowing before him, saying "Hail, King of the Jews." The praetorium rang with brutal laughter as they performed their stunts of mimicry in this insulting pageantry of state. As though the insults offered him were not already enough, one snatched the reed from his hand and struck him on the head, while others slapped him in the face and spat upon him.

### *Behold The Man*

When they brought him faint and bedrabbled with blood back into Pilate's presence, Pilate pointed at him saying, "Behold the man." If the governor still hoped that the priests would relent, he was disappointed, for they continued to cry, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

When Pilate still protested, one of the leaders declared that according to their law he ought to die, "Because he made himself the son of God." These words touched the superstition latent in Pilate's nature. Greek and Roman mythologies made it easier for a pagan than for a Jew to believe in the incarnation of a divine being. If this man were a god or the son of a god, that might explain his own misgivings as he looked upon one who behaved with such dignity in a situation so distressing. It might also explain his wife's strange dream about the Nazarene, and it might account for his lofty and enigmatical speech.

He appealed to Jesus, asking where he came from, but Jesus gave him no answer. "Do you refuse to speak to me?" said Pilate. "Do you not understand that I have power to release or to crucify you?"

Pitying the weakness of his judge, Jesus replied, "You have only such power as heaven grants you, and your reluctance to kill me makes you less guilty than the man who delivered me into your hands."

Pilate again signified his desire to release him, but the priests protested. "If you release him you are

no friend of Caesar. Any one who makes himself a king is setting himself up against Caesar."

That settled it. Pilate, who had already taxed the patience of Tiberius, dared not face the imputation or charge of disloyalty to his chief. Feeling that he must yield, and maddened by the Jews' contempt for his scruples, he said, "Shall I crucify your king?" They yelled back at him, "We have no king but Caesar."

The few hours remaining to Jesus were full of woe, but his dignity, patience and love shone brightly through them all.

### *Compassion and Prayer Of Jesus*

When, according to custom, they laid on Jesus the cross which a convict was expected to carry to the place of execution, he sank beneath its burden, having been so greatly weakened by his previous labors and suffering. Compelling another man to carry it, they proceeded to the place of execution.

Along the wayside and among the people who followed them were women who filled the air with cries of pity. These were probably the only expressions of sympathy which Jesus had heard since the hour of his arrest, and he turned in beautiful self forgetfulness and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children; for I tell you that a time is coming when it shall be said, 'Blessed are the women who are childless;' for if the green wood makes so fierce a fire, how will it be when the wood is dry."

When offered it, Jesus refused the stupifying draught which pitiful folk sometimes provided for those doomed thus to die, and we can understand the reason. He proposed to be himself and suffer with faculties unclouded to the very end.

The awful moment came when, stripped of his clothing, he was stretched upon the cross, which lay upon the ground, and the clang of the hammer an-

nounced that the final torture had begun. He said something which the soldiers did not understand as they drove the great spikes, roughly beaten into shape on the anvil, through his hands and feet. To them he was only a low-lived wretch uttering his hate and pain and fear of death and calling on his god in the barbarous jargon of his race. What he really was saying, over and over again, in the native tongue of the common people, a language sweetened to northern ears by the brogue of Galilee, was, "Father, forgive them! Father, forgive them! They know not what they do."

### *Jesus On The Cross*

The cross was then lifted into a perpendicular position and dropped into the hole prepared for it, the gravel tamped about it to keep it upright. If anything more were needed to complete his infamy, it was afforded by the crucifixion with him of two robbers, possibly outlaws on account of political offenses, who had turned to banditry among the Judean hills. Their crosses were so planted that Jesus hung between them.

An inscription was put upon the cross in Greek, Latin and Hebrew, saying, "The King of The Jews." This moved spectators to derision, and they said, "Hail, King of the Jews." Others said, "Let him come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God and said, 'I am the son of God.' If God wants him, let him save him now." Others, remembering his miracles, said, "He saved others; he can not save himself."

Matthew and Mark report that the crucified robbers also joined in the general derision of their fellow sufferer; but Luke reports one of them as rebuking his companion, and saying to Jesus, "Remember me, when you come to reign;" to whom Jesus replied, "You will be with me in Paradise today."

An utterable compassion drew to the cross a few



friends and relatives of Jesus. He still had strength to speak, and glancing from his mother to the disciple John, he said, "Thy son;" then looking back at her, he said, "Thy mother." They understood. Thus sweetly mindful of her who had taught his baby lips to say the first and great commandment, he committed her to the care of his dearest friend.

The enemies of Jesus had been able to secure his crucifixion early in the day. The passover feast had occupied the attention of pilgrims well into the night, and they scarcely knew what was going on in the morning until they found their prophet in the hands of his enemies and under sentence of death. Dazed and unorganized, they made no effort to deliver him. This was precisely as the priests had planned.

It was about nine o'clock in the forenoon when Jesus was crucified and about three in the afternoon when he expired. These six hours were all he could endure on the cross after the labor and excitement of the last few days and the ordeal which preceded the crucifixion. His strength ebbed rapidly.

### *His Last Words*

There was an old hymn into which some Hebrew bard had once poured the anguish of a despairing soul. Its words express the perplexity of one apparently God-forsaken. They tell how vain has been his trust in God, how his enemies encompass and overcome him, like "a ravening, roaring lion," until his strength is dried up, and his "tongue cleaves to the roof of his mouth." They say that he is "the reproach of men and despised of the people," that they have pierced his hands and his feet and cast lots upon his vesture." They "stare at him and laugh him to scorn," they "shoot out the lip and shake the head," deriding his trust in God, and saying, "Let God rescue him, seeing he delights in him."

This hymn is known to us as the twenty second

psalm, and its words, so exactly depicting his own sorrowful plight came to Jesus' mind, and he began to repeat them: "Eloi! Eloi! Lama sabachthani," which mean, "My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me?" This is the first line of this old hymn which Jesus had probably known from childhood.

Perhaps he had not strength to quote further, and it may be that he could not utter these words distinctly, for some said that he was calling for Elijah.

"I thirst," he said, hoping, it may be, that a draught would facilitate his speech, and when they had given him drink, he said, "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit."

Realizing that the end had come, he put the remnant of his strength into the words, "It is finished."

While many who witnessed the crucifixion had gone from Golgotha smiting their breasts with sorrow, his relatives and most intimate friends lingered at the cross until he died. Even then they could not go away and leave his body with strangers. Joseph of Arithmathaea, a prominent Jew who had not consented to his death, went to Pilate and begged the privilege of taking his body down for burial. Pilate, surprised that he had died so soon, granted the request. With the assistance of Nicodemus and other friends he laid the body in a tomb near the place of execution.

This was done hastily between three o'clock and sundown, when the Sabbath would begin, and Mary of Magdala and some other women who saw where the body was laid, resolved that when the Sabbath was passed it should have a more perfect preparation for its long rest in the tomb.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### FROM CROSS TO CROWN

Pilate was glad to get through passover week without a riot among the Jews over their prophet-messiah. To crucify a man like Jesus and release one like Barabbas would have been a bad day's work if it had not saved him from trouble with the leaders in Jerusalem and the authorities at Rome. But now, thanks to Jupiter, another crisis had been safely passed.

Shrewd old Annas stroked his long white beard and smiled as he thought of the vengeance he had wreaked on Jesus for his denunciation of the Sadducees and for his onslaught on the temple market and coin exchange.

Caiaphas drew a long breath of relief when he saw that the multitude accepted the shame and death of their idol without lifting a hand in his defense, and was sure that the tide of sentiment which had once threatened an insurrection was ebbing now and would soon carry the disgraced pretender to his proper oblivion among the false prophets. The event had justified his declaration that it was better to sacrifice one man than to wreck the nation on his account.

People who suspected, without acknowledging, that Jesus was Messiah, were glad now that they had not openly espoused his cause. Those who accepted him as a prophet and hurrahed for him as Messiah were deeply disappointed, while many who had only been perplexed felt relieved by his sudden taking off from all further concern about him.

Departing pilgrims carried home an astounding tale of the reception which the pilgrims and people of Jerusalem had given the Galilean prophet, of the excitement which his preaching produced, of hopes entertained by thousands that he might be the Messiah,

all followed by his sudden and terrible death. This tragic tale horrified the common people of Galilee, who remembered his gracious words and healing miracles.

Words can not tell how desolate and broken hearted his disciples were after seeing their Master die upon the cross. In spite of his prediction that it would come to this, they had never been able to believe it.

### *Victory Through Death*

But the despair of Jesus' friends and the complacency of his enemies were brief. In an incredibly short time the Jewish leaders faced an astonishing sequel to their crime against the nation's prophet. The friends of Jesus were reporting that he was risen from the dead and the apostles and many others were reporting that they had seen him again. Not only so, but they had become as fearless as their fallen leader in preaching his gospel, to which they added their own gospel of his resurrection. And they were as ready to stake their lives upon their testimony as their Master had been to seal his message with his blood.

How were the prophet's enemies to meet this new issue? To show his dead body would be the best refutation of the claim that he was risen; but where was that body? It was no longer in the tomb. If they knew where it was, they might say so, and produce it. They could not well accuse the disciples of having stolen it, for in that case they would know where it was and that he was not risen. It was clear that they believed him risen, and the empty tomb confirmed the story.

The zeal of the disciples grew more intense, the joy of their assemblies less controllable until, seven weeks after the passover, on the day of pentecost, their joyful tumult brought a multitude to the place of meeting. In a memorable address, Peter assured them that Jesus, whom God had approved by miracles, and whom their rulers had slain, was the promised Messiah, that

he had risen from the dead, as some of them could personally testify, and that he would soon return from heaven to judge and rule.

This first great public appeal of the new movement won many converts. The patriot-preacher of Galilee, misunderstood and rejected, could never move the people like a martyred prophet risen from the dead and about to return from heaven as the nation's king and the judge of the world.

### *The Apocalyptic Christ*

Now for the first time the messiahship of Jesus could be harmonized with the prophet Daniel's picture of the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven. Now the disciples of Jesus had an orthodox doctrine of Messiah and an orthodox doctrine of the "end of the age." This new christology put the movement of Jesus into line with Essene and Pharisaic apocalypses then current in Israel and blended the social discontent, the political unrest and religious aspiration of the people into a glowing flame of Christian evangelism. The Essenes, whose fraternalism the preaching of Jesus had so strongly emphasized, were steadily and powerfully drawn into the new movement, the moderate and practical Essenes of the towns and cities being joined by so many of their monastic brethren that communities of Christian monks began to take the place of the old Essene brotherhoods of the Judean wilderness. Many Pharisees were attracted to the movement, not only by the lofty ethics of it, but because the new faith championed and demonstrated their favorite doctrine of the resurrection; while the rationalism of many priests and Sadducees was broken down by the power of Christian testimony.

The miracles of healing which marked the ministry of Jesus continued in the church and combined with the preaching of the apostles to produce those innocent and noisy tumults which often led to the arrest of the

preachers, and these defied admonition and imprisonment, declaring that they must tell the things they had seen and heard.

The Christian converts, warming toward each other on account of persecution, and looking for the speedy return of their Master in the clouds of heaven, made common property of their goods, and whether declaring their new faith at the temple or breaking bread at home, were lifted by glad enthusiasm above all earthly cares and interests, and had increasing favor among the people.

### *Christian Evangelism*

The new faith, bold enough for anything, soon asserted itself in the city synagogues and these became places of earnest debate about the new movement. Conspicuous among the synagogue champions of Christianity was Stephen, who argued with an eloquence and power which it was difficult to resist. Here he met Saul, a scholarly Jew from Cilicia, who encouraged the mob when they dragged Stephen from the synagogue and stoned him to death. Saul never forgot the glow on the martyr's face as, bruised and bleeding, he lifted his hands to heaven, saying, "Lord, charge not this sin against them."

A general persecution followed the death of Stephen, and when the fright and flight of the Christians encouraged the orthodox to believe that this fire of heresy might be put out, word came that the new sect had gotten started in the far off city of Damascus.

Commissioned by chief priests to hunt down heretics there, Saul was hastening to that city when something happened that was destined not only to change the course of his own life, but to give an immeasurable impulse to the Christian movement and change the course of history.

*The Persecutor Becomes An Apostle*

Jesus appeared to Saul. So he declared to those who were with him, and so he testified to all men to the end of his life, and he proved his sincerity by braving every sort of danger and by the patient endurance of incredible labors and hardships. He declared that in a flash of blinding light a radiant one appeared, who said, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest."

Arriving at Damascus, he comforted those he had come to kill, and thereafter gave his wonderful personality without reserve to the Christian cause. A Jewish scholar, reared at an important center of gentile culture, he so interpreted this faith which was distracting the Jewish world that it won Greeks and Latins faster than it had ever won Jews.

Though his interpretation of Christianity offended the Jerusalem church, he won some of the apostles over to at least a partial approbation of his peculiar type of evangelism, and his success outside Judea with both Jews and gentiles was such that to him more than to any one else was due the rapid spread of Christianity throughout the Roman empire, whose nominal conquest it achieved in about three hundred years.

*Jesus' Invisible Empire*

The story of the Christian movement can not be continued here. Its ever growing power has brought its founder to a sublime position in the consciousness of the race, a position of immeasurable power in the vast reaches and relations of history. His power over the souls of men is not due simply or even mainly to the story of his virgin birth and resurrection, but mostly to that awe-inspiring personality which looms like a superhuman figure through the tradition of his words and deeds. Through his human sympathy and spiritual insight, his faith in God and dauntless devotion to his task, he manifested that lofty and lonely greatness in which men recognize the divine.

Invisible through the ages, save to the eye of faith, he still lives in the growing love and labor of his people and leavens the world with his truth and life. In the long ordeal of his church and in all the tragic crises of history his words rebuke the meanness of mankind, his example points the better way and his Spirit girds the souls of men for holy and victorious endeavor.

Not on Zion's Hill, O Man of Galilee, dost thou sit crowned, yet grows thy empire in the conscience of mankind. Thy Spirit quickens into social order that chaos of the world where greed and pride brew war and mingle blood with tears. Thy loving message does not die amid the world's confusion, but lives and throbs and beats its way across the stormy years, and men will heed it yet and be made free by truth and crown thee Prince of Peace and truest Lord of Life.





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